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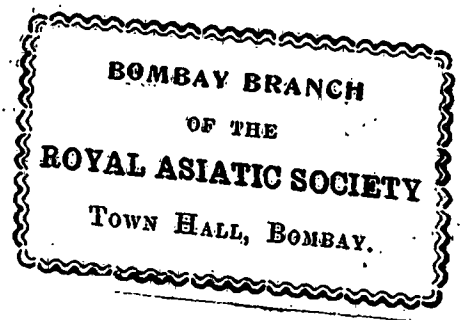

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THE

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA:

ITS ORIGIN,

AND

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS

DOWN TO THE DEATH OF

LORD RAGLAN.

By ALEXANDER WILLIAM KINGLAKE.

29996
ac

SECOND EDITION.

VOLUME I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.
MDCCCLXIII.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

A FEW Notes have been added to this Edition, but not a word of the Text has been changed.

THE SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE.

BEFORE I had determined to write any account of the war, there were grounds from which many inferred that a task of this kind would be mine; and I may say that, from the hour of their landing on the enemy's coast, close down to the present time, men, acting under this conviction, have been giving me a good deal of their knowledge.

In 1856 Lady Raglan placed in my hands the whole mass of the papers which Lord Raglan had with him at the time of his death. Having done this, she made it her request that I would cause to be published a letter which her husband addressed to her a few days before his death.* All else she left to me. Time passed, and no history founded upon these papers was given to the world. Time still passed away; and it chanced to me to hear that people who longed for the dispersion of what they believed to be falsehoods, were striving to impart to Lady Raglan the not unnatural impatience which all this delay had provoked. But, with a singleness of purpose and a strength of will which

* I need hardly say that this letter will appear in its proper place, though not in either of these two volumes.

remind one of the great soldier who was her father's brother, she answered that, the papers having once been placed under my control, she would not disturb me with expressions of impatience, nor suffer any one else to do so with her assent. I cannot be too grateful to her for her generous and resolute trustfulness. If these volumes are late, the whole blame rests with me. If they are reaching the light too soon, the fault is still mine.

Knowing Lord Raglan's habits of business, knowing his tendency to connect all public transactions with the labours of the desk, and finding in no part of the correspondence the least semblance of anything like a chasm, I am led to believe that, of almost everything concerning the business of the war which was known to Lord Raglan himself, there lies in the papers before me a clear and faithful record.

In this mass of papers there are, not only all the Military Reports which were from time to time addressed to the Commander of the English army by the generals and other officers serving under him (including their holograph narratives of the part they had been taking in the battles), but also Lord Raglan's official and private correspondence with sovereigns and their ambassadors; with ministers, generals, and admirals; with the French, with the Turks, with the Sardinians; with public men, and official functionaries of all sorts and conditions; with adventurers; with men propounding wild schemes; with dear and faithful

friends.* Circumstances had previously made me acquainted with a good deal of the more important information thus laid before me; but there is a completeness in this body of authentic records which enables me to tread with more confidence than would have been right or possible if I had had a less perfect survey of the knowledge which belonged to headquarters. And so methodical was Lord Raglan, and so well was he served by Colonel Steele, his military secretary, that all this mass of authentic matter lies ranged in perfect order. The strategic plans of the much-contriving Emperor—still carrying the odour of the havannahs which aid the ingenuity of the Tuileries—are ranged with all due care, and can be got at in a few moments; but, not less carefully ranged, and equally easy to find, is the rival scheme of the enthusiastic nosologist who advised that the Russians should be destroyed by the action of malaria, and the elaborate proposal of the English general who submitted a plan for taking Sebastopol with bows and arrows. Here and there, the neatness of the arranging hand is in strange contrast with the fiery contents of the papers arranged; for, along with reports and returns, and things precise, the most hurried scrawl of the commander who writes to his chief under stress of deep emotion, lies flat, and hushed, and docketed. It

* I have never looked at it since 1856, but it struck me then, that the letter which Mr Sidney Herbert addressed to Lord Raglan in the winter of the first campaign was the very ideal of what, in such circumstances, might be written by an English statesman who dearly loved his friend, but who loved his country yet more.

would seem as though no paper addressed to the English Headquarters was ever destroyed or mislaid.

With respect to my right to make public any of the papers intrusted to me, I have this, and this only, to say: circumstances have enabled me to know who ought to be consulted before any State Paper or private letter hitherto kept secret is sent abroad into the world; and, having this knowledge, I have done what I judge to be right.

The papers intrusted to me by Lady Raglan contain a part only of the knowledge which, without any energy on my part, I was destined to have cast upon me; for when it became known that the papers of the English Headquarters were in my hands, and that I was really engaged in the task which rumour had prematurely assigned to me, information of the highest value was poured in upon me from many quarters. Nor was this all. Great as was the quantity of information thus actually imparted to me, I found that the information which lay at my command was yet more abundant; for I do not recollect that to any one man in this country I have ever expressed any wish for the information which he might be able to give me, without receiving at once what I believe to be a full and honest disclosure of all he could tell on the subject. This facility embarrassed me; for I never could find that there was any limit to my power of getting at what was known in this country. I rarely asked a question without eliciting something which added,

more or less, to my labour, and tended to cause delay.

And now I have that to state which will not surprise my own countrymen, but which still, in the eyes of the foreigner, will seem to be passing strange. For some years, our statesmen, our admirals, and our generals, have known that the whole correspondence of the English Headquarters was in my hands; and very many of them have from time to time conversed and corresponded with me on the business of the war. Yet I declare I do not remember that any one of these public men has ever said to me that there was anything which, for the honour of our arms, or for the credit of the nation, it would be well to keep concealed. Every man has taken it for granted that what is best for the repute of England is, the truth.

I have received a most courteous, clear, and abundant answer to every inquiry which I have ventured to address to any French Commander; and, indeed, the willingness to communicate with me from that quarter was so strong, that an officer of great experience, and highly gifted with all the qualities which make an accomplished soldier, was despatched to this country with instructions to impart ample statements to me respecting some of the operations of the French army. I seize upon this occasion of acknowledging the advantage I derived from the admirably lucid statements which were furnished to me by this highly-instructed officer; and I know that those friends of mine to whom I had the honour of pre-

senting him, will join with me in expressing the gratification which we all derived from his society.

I thought it right to apprise the authorities of the French War Department, that, if they desired it, the journals of their divisions, and any other unpublished papers in their War-Office which they might be pleased to show, would be looked over by a gifted friend of mine, now a member of the House of Commons, who had kindly offered to undertake this task for me. The French authorities did not avail themselves of my offer; but any obscurity which might otherwise have resulted from this concealment has been effectually dispersed by the information I afterwards obtained from Russian sources.

Of all the materials on which I found my account of the battle of the Alma, hardly any have been more valuable to me than the narratives of the three Divisional Generals who there held command under Prince Mentschikoff. The gifted young Russian officer who obtained for me these deeply interesting narratives, and who kindly translated them from their Russian originals, has not only conferred upon me an important favour, but has also done that which will uplift the repute of the far-famed Russian infantry, by helping to show to Europe the true character of the conflict which it sustained on the banks of the Alma.

My knowledge respecting the battles of Balaclava and Inkerman, and the subsequent fights before Sebastopol, is still incomplete; and I shall welcome any information respecting these conflicts which men

may be pleased to intrust to me. From the Russians, especially, I hope that I may receive communications of this kind. Their defence of Sebastopol ranges high in the annals of warfare; and I imagine that the more the truth is known, the more it will redound to the honour of the Russian arms.

I do not in general appeal for proof to my personal observation, but I have departed from this abstinence in two or three instances where it seemed to me that I might prevent a waste of controversial energy by saying at once that the thing told had been seen or heard by myself.

With regard to the portion of the work which is founded upon unpublished documents and private information, I had intended at one time not to give the documents nor the names of my informants, nor the words they have written or spoken, but to indicate the nature of the statements on which I rely; as, for instance, to say in notes at the foot of a page, 'The 'Raglan Papers,' 'Letter from an officer engaged,' 'Oral statement made to me by one who was pre-'sent,' and the like. But, upon reflection, I judged that I could not venture to do this. When a published authority is referred to, any want of correspondence between the assertion and the proof can be detected by a reader who takes the trouble to ascend to the originals; but I do not like to assert that a document or a personal narrative withheld (for the present) from this wholesome scrutiny is the designated, yet hidden foundation of a statement which I make freely, in my own way, and in my own lan-

guage. So, although when I found my statements upon a Parliamentary Paper or a published book, I commonly give my authority; yet so far as concerns that part of the work which is based upon unpublished writings or private information — and this applies to an important part of the first, and to nearly the whole of the second volume—I in general make no reference to the grounds on which I rely. Hereafter it may be otherwise; but, for the present, this portion of the book must rest upon what, after all, is the chief basis of our historical knowledge—must rest upon the statement of one who had good means of knowing the truth. In the meanwhile, I shall keep and leave ready the clue by which, in some later time, and without further aid from me, my statements may be traced to their sources.

For a period of now several years my knowledge of what I undertake to narrate has been growing more and more complete. Far from gathering assurance at the sight of the progress thus made, I am rather led to infer that approaches which continued so long might continue perhaps still longer; and it is not without a kind of reluctance that I pass from the tranquil state of one who is absorbing the truth, to that of a man who at last stands up and declares it. But the time has now come.

A. W. KINGLAKE.

12 *St James's Place, London,*
1st January 1863.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

TRANSACTIONS WHICH BROUGHT ON THE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
The Crimea,	1
Ground for tracing the causes of the war,	5
Europe in 1850,	5
Standing armies,	5
Personal government,	5
Comparison between this system and that of governing through a council,	5
Personal government in Russia,	9
In Austria,	9
In Prussia,	9
Adminstration of foreign affairs under the Sultan,	9
Constitutional system of England in its bearing upon the conduct of foreign affairs,	9
And of France down to the 2d of December 1851,	11
Power of Russia,	12
Turkey,	13

CHAPTER II.

The Usage which tends to protect the weak against the strong,	20
Instance of a wrong to which the Usage did not apply,	22
Instance in which the Usage was applicable and was disobeyed,	22
Instances in which the Usage was faithfully obeyed,	23
By Austria,	23
By Russia,	24
By England,	25
The practical working of the Usage,	27
Aspect of Europe in reference to the Turkish Empire,	30
Policy of Austria,	30
Of Prussia,	31
Of France,	32
Of England,	34
Of the lesser states of Europe,	36

CHAPTER III.

PAGE

Holy shrines, ... 38
Contest for the possession of the shrines, ... 41
Patronage of foreign Powers, ... 41
Comparison between the claims of Russia and of France, . . 42
Measures taken by the French President, ... 44
By the Russian Envoy, ... 46
Embarrassment of the Porte, ... 46
Mutual concessions, ... 46
The actual subject of dispute, ... 46
Increased violence of the French Government, . . . 47
Afif Bey's mission, ... 48
Delivery of the key and the star, ... 51
Indignation of Russia, ... 51
Advance of Russian forces, ... 53

CHAPTER IV.

Natural ambition of Russia, ... 54
Its irresolute nature, ... 59
The Emperor Nicholas, ... 61
His policy from 1829 to 1853, ... 69

CHAPTER V.

Troubles in Montenegro, ... 71
Count Leiningen's mission, ... 72
The Czar's plan of sending another mission to the Porte at the same time, ... 72
Plans of the Emperor Nicholas, ... 73

CHAPTER VI.

Position of Austria in regard to Turkey at the beginning of 1853, . 74
Of Prussia, ... 75
Of France, ... 75
Of England, ... 78
Seeming state of opinion there, ... 78
Sir Hamilton Seymour, ... 83
His conversation with the Emperor, ... 84
Reception of the Czar's overtures by the English Government, . 90
Result of Count Leiningen's mission, ... 91
Its effect upon the plans of the Czar, ... 92
He abandons the idea of going to war, ... 92

CHAPTER VII.

PAGE
The pain of inaction, ... 93
The Czar's new scheme of action, ... 95
His choice of an ambassador, ... 96
Prince Mentschikoff, ... 96
Mentschikoff at Constantinople, ... 98
Panic in the Divan, ... 99
Colonel Rose, ... 100
The Czar seemingly tranquillised, ... 101
The French fleet suddenly ordered to Salamis, . . . 101
The Emperor Nicholas, his concealments, ... 102
Mentschikoff's demands, ... 103

CHAPTER VIII.

Foreign 'influence,' 107
Grounds for foreign interference in Turkey, ... 107
Rivalry between Nicholas and Sir Stratford Canning, . . 111
Sir Stratford Canning, ... 111
Instructed to return to Constantinople, ... 116
His instructions, ... 116

CHAPTER IX.

Lord Stratford's return, ... 121
His plan of resistance to Mentschikoff's demands, . . . 123
Commencement of the struggle between Prince Mentschikoff and Lord Stratford, ... 125

CHAPTER X.

State of the dispute respecting the Holy Places, . . . 132
Lord Stratford's measures for settling it, ... 135
He settles it, ... 138
Terms on which it was settled, ... 138

CHAPTER XI.

Peaceful aspect of the negotiation, ... 141
Angry despatches from St Petersburg, ... 141
Cause of the change, ... 142
Inferred tenor of the fresh despatches, ... 142
Mentschikoff's demand for a protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey, ... 144
Effect of conceding it, ... 145
The negotiations which followed the demand, . . . 145
Rage of the Czar on finding himself encountered by Lord Stratford, 149

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

PAGE

Its effect upon the negotiation, ... 151
Mentschikoff's difficulty, ... 151
He is baffled by Lord Stratford, ... 152
He presses his demand in a new form, ... 153
Counsels of Lord Stratford, ... 154
His communications with Prince Mentschikoff, . . . 154
His advice to the Turkish ministers, ... 156
His audience of the Sultan, ... 159
The disclosure which he had reserved for the Sultan's ear, . . 161
Turkish answer to Mentschikoff's demand, ... 161
Mentschikoff's angry reply, ... 162
His private audience of the Sultan, ... 162
This causes a change of ministry at Constantinople, . . . 163
But fails to shake the Sultan, ... 163
Mentschikoff violently presses his demands, ... 164
The Great Council determine to resist, ... 165
Offers made by the Porte under the advice of Lord Stratford, . 165
Mentschikoff replies by declaring his mission at an end, . . 166
The representatives of the four Powers assembled by Lord Stratford, 166
Policy involved in this step, ... 167
Unanimity of the four representatives, ... 167
Their measures, ... 167
Russia's ultimatum, ... 168
Its rejection and final threats of Prince Mentschikoff, . . 170
His departure, ... 170
Effect of the mission upon the credit of Nicholas, . . . 171
Position in which Lord Stratford's skill had placed the Porte, . 174
Engagements contracted by England, ... 176
Obligations contracted by the act of giving advice, . . . 177
England in concert with France becomes engaged to defend the Sultan's dominions, ... 178
The process by which England became bound, . . . 179
Slowness of the English Parliament, ... 179
Powers intrusted to Lord Stratford, ... 180

CHAPTER XII.

Rage of the Czar, ... 182
The Danubian Principalities, ... 184
The Czar's scheme for occupying them, ... 185
Efforts to effect an accommodation, ... 186
Defective representation of France, Austria, and Prussia, at the Court of St Petersburg, ... 187
The Czar's reliance upon the acquiescence of England, . . 189
Orders for the occupation of the Principalities, . . . 194

CHAPTER XII.—*continued.*

PAGE
The Pruth passed, ... 195
Russian manifesto, ... 195
Course taken by the Sultan, ... 196
Religious character of the threatened war, ... 197

CHAPTER XIII.

Effect of the Czar's threat upon European Powers, . . 198
Upon Austria, ... 198
Upon Prussia, ... 199
Effect produced by the actual invasion of the Principalities, . 200
In Austria, ... 200
In France and England, ... 201
In Prussia, ... 201
Attitude of Europe generally, ... 201
Concord of the four Powers, ... 201
Their means of repression, ... 202
Their joint measures, ... 202
Importance of maintaining close concert between the four Powers, . 202

CHAPTER XIV.

State of the French Republic in November 1851, . . . 205
Prince Louis Bonaparte, ... 207
His overtures to the gentlemen of France at the time when he was President, ... 223
He is rebuffed and falls into other hands, ... 224
Motives which pressed him forward, ... 224
He declares for universal suffrage, ... 225
His solemn declarations of loyalty to the Republic, . . . 226
Morny, ... 227
Fleury, ... 228
Fleury searches in Algeria and finds St Arnaud, . . . 230
St Arnaud is suborned and made Minister of War, . . . 230
Maupas, ... 231
He is suborned and made Prefect of Police, ... 232
Persigny, ... 232
Contrivance for paralysing the National Guard, . . . 233
The army and its indignation at M. Baze's proposal, . . 234
Selection of regiments and of officers for the army of Paris, . 235
Magnan, ... 235
Meeting of twenty generals at Magnan's house, . . . 236
The army encouraged in its hatred of the people, . . . 237
Assembly at the Elysée on Monday night, ... 237
Vieyra's errand, ... 237

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

PAGE

Before midnight several of the confederates assemble in an inner room, ... 237
The President intrusts a packet to Colonel Beville, . . . 238
Transaction at the State Printing-Office, ... 239
Tenor of the Proclamations, ... 239
Letters dismissing ministers not in the plot, ... 239
Hesitation of the plotters at the Elysée, ... 240
Fleury drags them on, ... 240
The order from the Minister of War is in the hands of Magnan, . 240
Maupas's arrangements for the intended arrests, ... 241
Disposition of the troops, ... 241
The arrests of the principal generals and prominent statesmen, . 242
Morny takes possession of the Home Office, ... 243
Newspapers seized and stopped, ... 243
Meeting of the Assembly, ... 243
It is dispersed by troops, ... 243
The President's ride, ... 243
Seclusion and gloom of Prince Louis, ... 244
Measures for sheltering him from alarming messengers, . . 245
Meeting of the Assembly in another building, ... 246
Its decrees, ... 246
Troops ascend the stairs, but hesitate to use force, . . . 246
Written orders from Magnan to clear the hall, ... 247
The Assembly refuses to yield except to force, ... 247
The whole Assembly taken prisoners by the troops, and marched to the Quai d'Orsay, ... 247
The Assembly imprisoned in the d'Orsay barrack, ... 248
The Members of the Assembly carried off to different prisons in felons' vans, ... 249
The quality of the men imprisoned, ... 249
The quality of the men who imprisoned them, ... 250
Sitting of the Supreme Court, ... 250
The Judges driven from the bench, ... 251
Circumstances which rendered it imprudent to resort to insurrection for the defence of the laws, ... 251
The Committee of Resistance, ... 253
Attempted rising in the Faubourg St Antoine, ... 254
The barricade of the Rue St Marguerite, ... 254
Barricades in Central Paris, ... 255
State of Paris at two o'clock on Dec. 4, ... 256
Attitude of the troops, ... 256
Hesitation of Magnan, ... 257
Its probable grounds, ... 258
Apparent terror of the plotters, ... 258
Stratagem of forming the 'Consultative Commission,' . . . 258

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

PAGE

Magnan at length resolves to act, ... 260
Point of contact between the ground occupied by the troops and that occupied by the insurgents, ... 260
State of the Boulevard at three o'clock, ... 261
The massacre of the Boulevard, ... 263
Slaughter in Central Paris, ... 271
Slaughter of prisoners, ... 273
Mode of dealing with some of the prisoners at the Prefecture, . 274
Gradations by which slayers of vanquished men may be distinguished, 274
Slaughter ranging under all those categories caused by the confederates, ... 277
Inquiry as to the alleged shooting of prisoners who were in the hands of the civil power, ... 277
Uncertainty as to the number of people killed, ... 281
Total loss of the army in killed, ... 282
Effect of the massacre upon the people of Paris, ... 282
Effect of the massacre in removing one of Louis Bonaparte's personal disqualifications, ... 284
The fate of the provinces, ... 285
Motives for the ferocity of the measures taken, ... 287
Terror, and afterwards a hope of gaining support from men afraid of anarchy, ... 287
General dread of the Socialists, ... 287
The brethren of the Elysée take advantage of this, ... 288
They pretend to be engaged in a war against Socialism, . . 288
Support thus obtained, ... 289
Commissaries sent into the provinces, ... 289
The Church, ... 290
France dismanned, ... 292
Twenty-six thousand five hundred men transported, . . 293
The Plebiscite, ... 295
Causes rendering free election impossible, ... 295
The election under martial law, ... 296
Violent measures taken for coercing the election, . . . 296
Contrivance for coercing the election by the vote of the army, . 298
France succumbs, ... 298
Prince Louis sole lawgiver of France, ... 299
The laws he gave her, ... 299
Importance of the massacre on the Boulevard, ... 299
Inquiry into its cause, ... 299
The passion of terror, ... 301
State of Prince Louis Bonaparte during the period of danger, . 302
He gives all he has to the soldiers, ... 303
He even signed the decree of the 5th of December, . . . 305
State of Jerome Bonaparte, ... 305

CHAPTER XIV.—*continued.*

PAGE

Natural anxiety of Napoleon, son of Jerome, . . . 306
Bodily state of Maupas, ... 306
Grounds for the anxiety of the plotters and of Magnan, &c., . 307
Effect of anxious suspense upon French troops, . . . 307
Surmised cause of the massacre, ... 309
Gratitude due to Fleury, ... 311
The use the Elysée made of France, ... 311
The oath which the President had taken, ... 312
His added promise as 'a man of honour,' 312
The Te Deum, ... 312
The President becomes Emperor of the French, . . . 314
The inaction of great numbers of Frenchmen, . . . 314
Its cause, ... 315
The gentlemen of France resolve to stand aloof from the Government, 316
The constant peril in which the confederates were kept, . . 316
The foreign policy of France used to prop the new throne, . . 316

CHAPTER XV.

Immediate effect of the Coup d'Etat upon the tranquillity of Europe, 318
The policy which it necessitated, ... 318
The French Government coerces the Sultan into measures offensive to Russia, ... 319
And then seeks an alliance with England, ... 319
Personal feelings of the new Emperor, ... 320
The French Emperor's scheme for superseding the concord of the four Powers, ... 321
The nature of the understanding of Midsummer 1853 between France and England, ... 326
Announcement of it to Parliament, ... 331
Failure of Parliament to understand the real import of the disclosure, 331
The Queen's Speech, August 1853, ... 332
This marks where the roads to peace and war branch off, . . 333

CHAPTER XVI.

Count Nesselrode, ... 334
State of the Czar after learning that the fleets of France and England were ordered to the mouth of the Dardanelles, . . 335
His complaints to Europe, ... 336
Their refutation, ... 336
The Vienna Conference, ... 337
The effect upon England of becoming entangled in a separate understanding with France, ... 338
The French Emperor's ambiguous scheme of action, . . 338

CHAPTER XVI.—*continued.*

	PAGE
His diplomacy seems pacific,	339
He engages England in naval movements tending to provoke war,	339
The Bosphorous and the Dardanelles,	340
The Sultan's ancient right to control them,	341
Policy of Russia in regard to the Straits,	341
The rights of the Sultan and the five Powers under the Treaty of 1841,	342
How these rights were affected by the Czar's seizure of the Principalities,	342
Powerful means of coercing the Czar,	343
Importance of refraining from a premature use of the power,	343
Naval movements in which the French Emperor engages England,	343
Proofs of this,	344
Means well fitted for enforcing a just peace so used to provoke war,	345

CHAPTER XVII.

Lord Stratford's scheme of pacification,	346
The 'Vienna Note,'	347
Agreed to by the four Powers and accepted by Russia,	348
The French Emperor does nothing to thwart the success of the Note,	348
Lord Stratford had not been consulted,	349
The 'Vienna Note' in the hands of Lord Stratford,	351
The Turkish Government determines to reject it unless altered,	352
Lord Stratford and the Turks stand alone in Europe,	353
They are firm,	353
Language used by Nesselrode,	354
The Protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey still the thing in question,	354
The Porte declares war,	354
Warlike spirit of the belligerents,	354
Warlike ardour of the people in the Ottoman Empire,	355
Moderation of the Turkish Government,	356
Its effect on the mind of the Czar,	356
The Czar's proclamation,	356

CHAPTER XVIII.

Announcement by the Czar,	358
The negotiations are continued,	358
Movement at Constantinople,	359
The use made of this by the Turkish Ministers,	359
They succeed in alarming the French Ambassador,	360
Composure of Lord Stratford,	361
His wise and guarded measures,	361

CHAPTER XVIII.—*continued.*

PAGE

The French Emperor. His means of putting a pressure upon the English Cabinet, ... 362
Violent urgency of the French Emperor for an advance of the fleets to Constantinople, ... 364
Needlessness of the measure, ... 364
Its tendency to bring on war, ... 365
The English Government yields to the French Emperor, . . 366
Fleet ordered up to Constantinople, ... 366
Want of firmness and discretion evinced in the adoption of the measure, ... 366
Baron Brunnow's remonstrance, ... 367
Effect of the measure at St Petersburg, ... 368
Count Nesselrode's sorrow, ... 368
The Czar's determination to retaliate, ... 368
Error of the notions regarding the disaster of Sinope, . . 369
Ostentatious publicity of the Russian operations in the Black Sea, . 369
Tidings of an impending attack by the Russian fleet, . . 370
Inaction of the Ambassadors and the Admirals, . . . 371
The disaster of Sinope, ... 373

CHAPTER XIX.

Chasm in the instructions to the Admirals of the Western Powers, . 375
Tends to bring blame upon the Home Government, . . . 376
Reception of the tidings of Sinope in France and England, . . 376
The anger of the English people diverted towards the Czar, . 377
An unjust charge against him gains belief in England, . . 377
First decision of the English Cabinet in regard to Sinope, . . 378
Lord Palmerston resigns office, ... 378
Proposal of the French Emperor, ... 379
Danger of breaking down the old barriers between peace and war, . 379
Ambiguous character of the proposal, ... 379
The French Emperor presses upon the English Cabinet, . . 380
Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet yields, ... 381
Lord Palmerston withdraws his resignation, ... 382
Orders to execute the scheme and to announce it at St Petersburg, 383

CHAPTER XX.

Terms of settlement agreed to by the four Powers and forced upon the Turks, ... 384
Grounds for expecting an amicable solution, ... 384
Friendly reception by the Russian Government of the news of the first decision of the English Cabinet, ... 385

CHAPTER XX.—*continued.*

PAGE

Announcement at St Petersburg of the scheme finally adopted by the Western Powers, ... 386
The negotiations are ruined, ... 387
Rupture of the diplomatic relations, ... 387
The Czar prepares to invade Turkey, and fleets enter the Euxine, . 387

CHAPTER XXI.

Military error of the Czar in occupying Wallachia, . . . 388
Of this Omar Pasha takes skilful advantage, . . . 388
His autumn and winter campaigns, ... 389
Embarrassment and distress of the Czar, ... 390
He resorts for aid to Paskievitch, ... 391
Paskievitch's counsels, ... 392
Movement of troops in the Russian Empire, . . . 394

CHAPTER XXII.

Sir John Burgoyne and Colonel Ardent despatched to the Levant, . 395
Troops sent to Malta, ... 396
Tendency of this measure, ... 396
Ministers determine to propose but a small increase of the army, . 396
Continuance of Lord Aberdeen's imprudent language, . . 397

CHAPTER XXIII.

The French Emperor's letter to the Czar, ... 399
Mission to St Petersburg from the English Peace Party, . . 402

CHAPTER XXIV.

Temper of the English an obstacle to the maintenance of peace, . 404
Their desire for war, ... 404
Causes of the apparent change in their feeling, . . . 404
State of feeling in the spring of 1853, ... 408
Effect of the Czar's aggression upon the public mind, . . 409
Still in foreign affairs the nation looks for guidance to public men, . 409
Lord Aberdeen, ... 410
Mr Gladstone, ... 412
Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone remain in office, . . . 413
Effect of this on the efforts of those who wished to prevent war, . 413
The ruin of their cause not for want of grounds to stand upon, . 415
Nor of oratorical power, ... 416
Mr Cobden and Mr Bright, ... 416
Reasons why they were able to make no stand, . . . 417

CHAPTER XXV.

PAGE
Meeting of Parliament, ... 422
The Queen's Speech, ... 422
The policy which it indicated, ... 423
The separate understanding with France, ... 423
Unswerving resolve of Austria and Prussia to rid the Principalities of Russian troops, ... 423
Proofs of this from transactions anterior to the Queen's Speech, . 424
From transactions subsequent thereto, ... 428
The interests of Austria and Prussia begin to divide them from the Western Powers, ... 434
Austria and Prussia never swerve from their resolve, . . . 435

CHAPTER XXVI.

Spirit of warlike adventure in England, ... 437
Its bearing upon the policy of the Government, ... 438
England's engagements with the French Emperor, ... 439
Into this policy the bulk of the Cabinet drift, ... 440
The Minister who went his own way, ... 440
Lord Palmerston's way of masking the tendency of the Government, 450
Debates upon the Address, ... 451
Parliament in the dark as to the real tendency of the Government, 451
Production of the papers, ... 453
Their effect, ... 453
Question on which the judgment of Parliament should have been rested, ... 454

CHAPTER XXVII.

Last step, which brought on the final rupture, ... 456
Austria's proposition, ... 457
Importance of avoiding haste, ... 458
Pressure of the French Emperor, ... 458
Eagerness of the people in England, ... 458
The Government loses its composure, ... 459
The summons despatched by England, ... 459
Instructions to the messenger, ... 460
And to Lord Westmorland, ... 460
Austria not required to take part in the summons, ... 460
The counter proposals of Russia reach Vienna, ... 461
They are rejected by the Conference of the four Powers, . . 461
Austria and Prussia support the summons without taking part in the step, ... 461
The French summons, ... 462
France and England brought into a state of war with Russia, . 462

CHAPTER XXVII.—*continued.*

PAGE

Message from the French Emperor to the Chambers, . . 462
Message from the Queen to Parliament, ... 463
Declaration of war, ... 463
Difficulty of framing it, ... 464
The Czar's Declaration and War Manifesto, ... 465
His invasion of Turkey is commenced, ... 466
Treaty between the Sultan and the Western Powers, . . 466
Treaty between France and England, ... 466

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Recapitulation, ... 468
Standing causes of the disturbance, ... 468
Effect of personal government by the Czar, ... 468
By the Emperor of Austria, ... 469
By the King of Prussia, ... 470
By the French Emperor, ... 470
Share of Russia in bringing about the War, ... 471
Share of Turkey in causing it, ... 475
Share which Austria had, ... 477
In other respects Austria discharged her duty, . . . 479
Share which Prussia had, ... 479
In other respects Prussia discharged her duty, . . . 481
As did also the German Confederation, ... 482
Share which the French Government had in causing the war, . 482
Share which England had, ... 485
The volitions which governed events, ... 493

APPENDIX.

Part I.—Papers showing the difference which led to the rupture of Prince Mentschikoff's negotiation, . . . 497

Part II.—The 'Vienna Note,' with the proposed Turkish modifications, ... 501

Part III.—Papers showing the concord existing between the four Powers at the time when France and England were engaging in a separate course of action, . . 503

Part IV.—Note to page 302, ... 518

ILLUSTRATION TO VOL. I.

Plate I. . . . . *to face* page 388

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.

CHAPTER I.

In the middle of this century the peninsula which divides the Euxine from the Sea of Azoff was an almost forgotten land, lying out of the chief paths of merchants and travellers, and far away from all the capital cities of Christendom. Rarely any one went thither from Paris, or Vienna, or Berlin: to reach it from London was a harder task than to cross the Atlantic; and a man of office receiving in this distant province his orders despatched from St Petersburg, was the servant of masters who governed him from a distance of a thousand miles.

Along the course of the little rivers which seamed the ground, there were villages and narrow belts of tilled land, with gardens, and fruitful vineyards; but for the most part the Chersonese was a wilderness of steppe or of mountain range much clothed towards the west with tall stiff grasses, and the stems of a fragrant herb like southernwood. The bulk of the people were of Tartar descent, but they were no longer in

CHAP. I.

the days when nations trembled at the coming of the Golden Horde; and though they were of the Moslem faith, their religion had lost its warlike fire. Blessed with a dispensation from military service, and far away from the accustomed battle-fields of Europe and Asia, they lived in quiet, knowing little of war, except what tradition could faintly carry down from old times in low monotonous chants. In their husbandry they were more governed by the habits of their ancestors than by the nature of the land which had once fed the people of Athens, for they neglected tillage and clung to pastoral life. Watching flocks and herds, they used to remain on the knolls very still for long hours together, and when they moved, they strode over the hills in their slow-flowing robes with something of the forlorn majesty of peasants descended from warriors. They wished for no change, and they excused their content in their simple way by saying that for three generations their race had lived happy under the Czars.*

But afterwards, and for reasons unknown to the shepherds, the chief Powers of the earth began to break in upon these peaceful scenes. France, England, and Turkey were the invaders, and these at a later day were reinforced by Sardinia. With the whole might which she could put forth in a province far removed from her military centre, Russia stood her

* The villagers of Eskel (on the Katcha) declared this to me on the 23d of September 1854, and the date gives value to the acknowledgment, for these villagers had been witnessing the confusion and seeming ruin of the Czar's army.

ground. The strife lasted a year and a half, and for twelve months it raged. CHAP. I.

And with this invasion there came something more than what men saw upon the battle-fields of the contending armies. In one of the Allied States, the people, being free of speech and having power over the judgment of their rulers, were able to take upon themselves a great share of the business of the war. It was in vain that the whole breadth of Europe divided this people from the field of strife. By means unknown before, they gained fitful and vivid glimpses of the battle and the siege, of the sufferings of the camp and bivouac, and the last dismal scenes of the hospital tent; and being thus armed from day to day with fresh knowledge, and feeling conscious of a warlike strength exceeding by a thousand fold the strength expressed by the mere numbers of their army, they thronged in, and made their voice heard, and became partakers of the counsels of State. The scene of the conflict was mainly their choice. They enforced the invasion. They watched it hour by hour. Through good and evil days they sustained it, and when by the yielding of their adversary the strife was brought to an end, they seemed to pine for more fighting. Yet they had witnessed checkered scenes. They counted their army on the mainland. They watched it over the sea. They saw it land. They followed its march. They saw it in action. They tasted of the joy of victory. Then came the time when they had to bear to see their army dying upon a bleak hill from cold and want. In their

CHAP. I.

anguish this people strove to know their General. They had seen him in the hour of battle, and their hearts had bounded with pride. They saw him now commanding a small force of wan, feeble, dying men, yet holding a strong enemy at bay, and comporting himself as though he were the chief of a strong, besieging army. They hardly knew at the time that for forty days the fate of two armies and the lasting fame and relative strength of great nations were hanging upon the quality of one man's mind. Tormented with grief and anger for the cruel sufferings of their countrymen, they turned upon the Chief with questioning looks, and seeing him always holding his ground and always composed, they strove to break in upon the mystery of his calm. But there, their power fell short. Except by withstanding the enemy, he made them no sign, and when he was reinforced and clothed once more with power, he still seemed the same to them. At length they saw him die. Thenceforth they had to look upon the void which was left by his death. They grew more patient. They did not become less resolute. What they hoped and what they feared in all these trials, what they thought, what they felt, what they saw, what they heard, nay, even what they were planning against the enemy, they uttered aloud in the face of the world; and thence it happened that one of the chief features of the struggle was the demeanour of a free and impetuous people in time of war.

Again, the invasion of the Crimea so tried the strength, so measured the enduring power of the

nations engaged, that, when the conflict was over, their relative stations in Europe were changed, and they had to be classed afresh.

Moreover, the strife yielded lessons in war and policy which are now of great worth.

Ground for tracing the causes of the war

But this war was deadly. It brought, they say, to the grave full a million of workmen and soldiers. It consumed a pitiless share of the wealth which man's labour had stored up as the means of life. More than this, it shattered the framework of the European system, and made it hard for any nation to be thenceforth safe except by its sheer strength. It seems right that the causes of a havoc which went to such proportions should be traced and remembered.

Europe in 1850.

For thirty-five years there had been peace between the great Powers of Europe. The outbreaks of 1848 had been put down. The wars which they kindled had been kept within bounds, and had soon been brought to an end. Kings, emperors, and statesmen declared their love of peace. But always whilst they spoke, they went on levying men. Russia, Germany, and France were laden with standing armies.

Standing armies.

Personal government.

Comparison between this system and that of governing through a Council.

This was one root of danger. There was another. Between a sovereign who governs for himself, and one who reigns through a council of statesmen, there are points of difference which make it more likely that war will result from the will of the one man than from the blended judgments of several chosen advisers. In these days the exigencies of an army are vast and devouring. Also, modern society growing more and more vulnerable by reason of the very beauty

CHAP. I.

and complexity of its arrangements is made to tremble by the mere rumour of an appeal to arms; and, upon the whole, the evils inflicted by war are so cruel, and the benefit which a Power may hope to derive from a scheme of aggression is commonly so obscure, so remote, and so uncertain, that when the world is in a state of equilibrium and repose it is generally very hard to see how it can be really for the interest of any one State to go and do a wrong, clearly tending to provoke a rupture. Here, then, there is something like a security for the maintaining of peace. But this security rests upon the supposition that a State will faithfully pursue its own welfare, and therefore it ceases to hold good in a country where the government happens to be in such hands that the interests of the nation at large fail to coincide with the interests of its ruler. This history will not dissemble —it will broadly lay open—the truth that a people no less than a prince may be under the sway of a warlike passion, and may wring obedience to its fierce command from the gentlest ministers of state; but upon the whole, the interests, the passions, and foibles which lead to war are more likely to be found in one man than in the band of public servants which is called a ministry. A ministry, indeed, will share in any sentiments of just national anger, and it may even entertain a great scheme of state ambition, but it can scarcely be under the sway of fanaticism, or vanity, or petulance, or bodily fear; for though any one member of the Government may have some of these defects, the danger of them will always be

neutralised in council. Then again, a man rightly called a minister of state is not a mere favourite of his sovereign, but the actual transactor of public business. He is in close intercourse with those labourers of high worth and ability who in all great States compose the permanent staff of the public office, and in this way, even though he be newly come to affairs, he is brought into acquaintance with the great traditions of the State, and comes to know and feel what the interests of his country are. Above all, a ministry really charged with affairs will be free from the personal and family motives which deflect the state policy of a prince who is his own minister, and will refuse to merge the interests of their country in the mere hopes and fears of one man.

On the other hand, a monarch governing for himself, and without responsible ministers, must always be under a set of motives which are laid upon him by his personal station as well as by his care for the people. Such a prince is either a hereditary sovereign or he is a man who has won the crown with his own hand. In the first case, the contingency of his turning out to be a man really qualified for the actual governance of an empire is almost, though not quite, excluded by the bare law of chances; and on the other hand it may be expected that a prince who has made his own way to the throne will not be wanting in such qualities of mind as fit a man for business of state. In some respects, perhaps, he will be abler than a council. He will be more daring, more resolute, more secret; but these are qualities

CHAP. I. conducive to war and not to peace. Moreover, a prince who has won for himself a sovereignty claimed by others will almost always be under the pressure of motives very foreign to the real interests of the State. He knows that by many he is regarded as a mere usurper, and that his home enemies are carefully seeking the moment when they may depose him, and throw him into prison, and ill-use him, and take his life. He commands great armies, and has a crowd of hired courtiers at his side; but he knows that if his skill and his fortune should both chance to fail him in the same hour, he would become a prisoner or a corpse. He hears, from behind, the stealthy foot of the assassin; and before him he sees the dismal gates of a jail, and the slow, hateful forms of death by the hand of the law. Of course he must and he will use all the powers of the State as a defence against these dangers, and if it chance to seem likely—as in such circumstances it often does—that war may give him safety or respite, then to war he will surely go; and although he knows that this rough expedient is one which must be hurtful to the State, he will hardly be kept back by such a thought, for, being, as it were, a drowning man who sees a plank within his reach, he is forced by the law of nature to clutch it; and his country is then drawn into war, not because her interests require it, nor even because her interests are mistaken by her ruler, but because she has suffered herself to fall into the hands of a prince whose road to welfare is distinct from her own.

The power of All the Russias was centred in the

CHAP. I.

Emperor, and it chanced that the qualities of Nicholas were of such a kind as to enable him to give a literal truth to the theory that he, and he alone, was the State.

Personal government in Russia.

In Austria the disasters of 1848 had broken the custom of government, and placed a kind of dictatorship in the hands of the youthful Emperor. And although before the summer of 1853 the traditions of the State had regained a great deal of their force, still for a time the recovery was not so plainly evidenced as to compel an unwilling man to see it; and the notion that the great empire of the Danube had merged in the mere wishes of Francis Joseph lingered always in the mind of the Czar and drew him on into danger.

In Austria.

Even in Prussia, though the country seemed to enjoy a constitutional form of government, the policy of the State was always liable to be deranged by the tremulous hand of the King; and the anticipation of finding weakness in this quarter was one of the causes which led the Czar to defy the judgment of Europe.

In Prussia.

In the Ottoman dominions Abdul Medjid was accustomed to leave the administration of foreign affairs to responsible ministers; and it will be seen that this wholesome method of reigning gave the Turkish Government a great advantage over the diplomacy of other Continental States.

Administration of foreign affairs under the Sultan.

In England there was no evil trace of that Oriental polity which yields up the power of the State into the hands of one human being. Happy in the love

Constitutional system of England in its

CHAP. I.

bearing upon the conduct of Foreign Affairs.

of the people who surrounded her throne, and free from all motives clashing with the welfare of her realms, the Queen always intrusted the business of the monarchy to ministers of state enjoying the confidence of Parliament; and upon the whole, the polity of the English state was such that no Government could draw the country into a needless war unless its error came to be shared by the bulk of the people. Indeed, the power of the Crown in England is so far from being a source of disturbance, that it is one of the safeguards of peace. There are circumstances in which an ancient reigning House gains a view of foreign affairs more tranquil and in some respects more commanding than any obtained by a Cabinet; and although it is known that in these days ministerial responsibility can never be evaded by alleging the order of the Crown, the practice of the Constitution requires that the Foreign Secretary shall have the actual sanction of his Sovereign for every important step which he takes; and it requires also that, in order to the obtaining of this sanction, the explanations tendered to the Crown by the ministry shall be complete and frank.* The duty of rendering these explanations, and of asking for the Royal sanction, can scarcely be fulfilled without giving a minister the advantage of seeing a question from a new point of view. Therefore, although the responsible Secretary for Foreign Affairs can never find shelter by setting up the overruling will of his

* The existing practice of the Constitution in this respect is laid down in the debates which began the Session of 1852.

Sovereign as the justification of his conduct, and although he must needs be supported by the advice or assent of Parliament, still he is not without means of guidance from sources of a less changeful kind; for whilst he has below him the tradition of the office, there is above him the tradition of the monarchy. By these means some steadfastness of purpose is generally, though not always, insured; and, except when it happens that the people are turned aside for a moment by some honest sentiment or moved by their innate desire to hear of insurrections and battles, the foreigner has good grounds for inferring that, whatever the policy of England may be, it will not be altogether unstable. Certainly the transactions of the East so drew England away from her landmarks as to bring her at last into war, and this, too, at a time when the Queen was still blessed with the counsels of a husband, who was a wise and a gifted statesman; but it will be seen by-and-by how it came to happen that the forces of the Constitution were baffled.

And of France, down to the 2d of December 1851.

France, down to the winter of 1851, was under parliamentary government, and although, as will be seen, the President was able to take steps which tended to generate troubles, the country was safe from the calamity of a wanton rupture with friendly States. The change wrought in the night of the 2d of December* will be shown by-and-by, and its effects upon the peace of Europe will be traced; but the period now spoken of is the middle of

* 1851.

CHAP. I. the century; and at that time, and so long as the Republic maintained a real existence, it was not possible in France, any more than in England, that a war should be undertaken by the Executive Government without the approval of Parliament and of the nation at large.

Power of Russia.

It was believed that the Emperor Nicholas numbered almost a million of men under arms; and of these a main part were brave, steady, obedient soldiers. Gathering from time to time great bodies of troops upon his western frontier, he caused the minds of men in the neighbouring states to be weighed down with a sense of his strength. Moreover, he was served by a diplomacy of the busy sort, always labouring to make the world hear of Russia and to acknowledge her might; and being united by family ties with some of the reigning Houses of Germany, he was able to have it believed that his favour might be of use to the courtiers and even sometimes to the statesmen of Central Europe. Down to the giving of trinkets and ribbons, he was not forgetful. His power was great; and when the troubles of 1848 broke out, the broad foundation of his authority was more than ever manifested; for, surrounded by sixty millions of subjects whose loyalty was hardly short of worship, he seemed to stand free and aloof from the panic which was overturning the thrones of the Western Continent, and to look down upon the terrors of his fellow-sovereigns, not deigning to yield his cold patronage to the cause of law and order. In the West, he said, and even in Cen-

tral Europe, the storm might rage as it liked, but he warned and commanded that the waves should not so much as cast their spray upon the frontiers of 'Holy Russia;'* and when Hungary rose, he ordered his columns to pass the border, and forced the insurgent army to lay down its arms. Then, proudly abstaining from conditions and recompense, he yielded up the kingdom to his Ally. That day Russia seemed to touch the pinnacle of her greatness; for men were forced to acknowledge that her power was vast, and that it was wielded in a spirit of austere virtue, ranging high above common ambition.

Turkey.

But towards the South, Russia was the neighbour of Turkey. The descendants of the Ottoman invaders still remained quartered in Roumelia and the adjoining provinces. They were a race living apart from the Christians who mainly peopled the land; for the original scheme of the Moslem invasions still kept its mark upon the country. When the Ottoman warriors were conquering a province, they used to follow the injunction of the Prophet, and call upon such of the nations as rejected the Koran to choose between 'the tribute' and the sword; but the destiny implied by the first branch of the alternative was very different from that of a people whose country is conquered by European invaders. Instead of being made subject to all the laws of their conquerors, the people of the Christian Churches were suffered to live apart, governing themselves in their own way, furnishing no recruits to the army, and

* See the Manifesto issued by the Czar in 1848.

CHAP. I.

having few legal relations with the State, except as payers of tribute.

In cities, the people of the Christian Churches and of the Synagogue generally had their respective districts, apart from the Moslem quarter. They were not safe from lawless acts of tyranny; and there were usages which reminded them that they were a conquered people; but they were never interfered with, as the citizens of European States are, for the mere sake of method or uniformity. They were free in the exercise of their religion; and most of the customs under which they lived were so completely their own, and so many of the laws which they obeyed were laws administered by themselves, that they might almost be said to form tributary republics in the midst of a military empire. Indeed, this distinct existence was so fully recognised as a result of Mahometan conquest that the Turkish Government was accustomed to give the title of a 'Nation' to the members of any Christian Church or Synagogue established within the Ottoman realm.

The subjects, or 'Rayahs,' as they are called, thus held under Mussulman sway, numbered perhaps fifteen millions; and although the Mussulmans of the whole Empire might be computed at twenty-one millions, the great bulk of these were scattered over remote provinces in Asia and Africa. There were hardly more than two million Turks in Europe. These dominant Ottomans were in an earlier stage of civilisation than most of the Christian States; and it had happened that their Government, in straining

to overtake and imitate the more cultivated nations, had broken down much of the strength which belongs to a warlike and simple people. Besides, amongst the Turks who clustered around the seat of government, a large proportion were men so spoilt by their contact with the metropolis of the Lower Empire, that, whilst the State suffered from the ignorance and simplicity of the governing race, it was suffering also in an opposite way under the evils which are bred by corruption.

Yet, notwithstanding the canker of Byzantian vice, and although they knew that they were liable to be baffled by the methods of high organisation and ingenious contrivance now brought to bear upon the structure of armies, the Ottoman people still upheld the warlike spirit which belongs to their race and to their faith. It is true that Russia, seizing a moment when the Sultan was without an ally,* and almost without an army,† had invaded Bulgaria in 1828, and, passing the Balkan in the following year, had brought the campaign to an issue which seemed like a triumph. Yet men versed in the affairs of Eastern Europe always knew that the Treaty of Adrianople had not been won by the real strength of the invaders, but rather by a daring stratagem in the nature of a surprise, and by a skilful feat in diplomacy. Experience showed that the Turks could

* The accustomed policy of England had been deranged by a sentiment in favour of Greece. Moreover, Lord Aberdeen was then at the Foreign Office.

† The Sultan had destroyed the Janissaries, and was beginning the formation of an army upon the European plan.

CHAP. I. 1850.

generally hold their ground with obstinacy, when the conditions of a fight were of such a kind that a man's bravery could make up for the want of preparation and discipline. In truth, they were a devoted soldiery, and fired with so high a spirit that, when brought into the right frame of mind, they could look upon the thought of death in action with a steadfast, lusty joy. They were temperate, enduring, and obedient to a degree unknown in other armies. They brought their wants within a very narrow compass; and, without much visible effort of commissariat skill or of transport power, they were generally found to be provided with bread and cartridges, and even with means of shelter. Their arms were always bright. Their faith tended to make them improvident; but a wise instinct taught them that if there was one thing which ought not to be left to fate or to the precepts of a deceased prophet, it was the Artillery. Their guns were well served. The Empire was wanting in the classes from which a large body of good officers and of able statesmen could be taken, and therefore, with all their bravery, the Turks were liable to be brought to the verge of ruin by panic in the field, or by panic in the Divan; but where the men are of so warlike a quality as the Turks, the want of able officers can be remedied to an almost incredible degree by the presence of a foreigner; and indeed the Osmanlee is so strangely cheered and supported by the mere sight of an Englishman, that aid rendered upon the spur of the moment by five or six of our countrymen has more

than once changed despair into victory, and governed the course of events. Help of that sort, whatever our Government might do, was not again likely to be wanting to the Turks in a defensive war. Moreover, the vast and desolate tracts of country which lie between the Pruth and the Bosphorus cannot easily be crossed by an army requiring large supplies, especially if it should be deprived of the sea communication. It is true that neither the warlike qualities of the Ottoman people nor the physical difficulties of the invasion were well understood in Europe, and it was commonly believed that Turkey, if left unsupported, would lie completely at the mercy of the Czar. This, however, was an error. Except in the possible event of their being overwhelmed by some panic, the Turks were not liable to be speedily crushed by an army forcing the line of the Danube and advancing through the passes of the Balkan.

But also, the conquest of European Turkey was obstructed by the very splendour of the prize. To have the dominion of the summer kiosks, and the steep shady gardens looking down on the straits between Europe and Asia, is to have a command which carries with it nothing less than an Empire: and since the strength of every nation is relative, and is liable to be turned to nought by the aggrandisement of another Power, it was plain that no one among the nations of Europe could be seen going in quest of dominion on the Bosphorus without awakening alarm and resistance on the part of the other great Powers. Certainly the Turks trusted

CHAP. I.

much in Heaven; but being also highly skilled in so much of the diplomatic art as was needed for them in this temporal world, they knew how to keep alive the watchfulness of every Power which was resolved to exclude its rivals from the shores of the Bosphorus. Moreover, those descendants of the Ottoman conquerors still remained gifted with the almost inscrutable qualities which enable a chosen race to hold dominion over a people more numerous and more clever than their masters. There were a few English statesmen and several English travellers who had come to understand this; but the generality of men in the Christian countries found it hard to make out that a people could be wise without being keenly intelligent, and could see little strength in a civilisation much earlier and more rude than their own.

So in the common judgment of the world it had long seemed natural that, as a result of the decay which was thought to have come upon the Ottoman Empire, its European provinces should revert to Christendom. By many the conquest of them was thought to be an easy task: for the Turks were few and simple, and in peace-time very listless and improvident; and the bulk of the people held under their sway in Europe were Christians, who bore hatred against their Ottoman masters. And to Russia these same provinces seemed to be of a worth beyond all kind of measurement, for they lay towards the warm South, and, commanding the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, gave access to and

fro between the Euxine and the Mediterranean. The Power which seemed to be abounding in might was divided from the land of temptation by a mere stream of water. No treaty stood in the way.* Was there in the polity of Europe any principle, custom, or law which could shelter the weak from the strong, and forbid the lord of eight hundred thousand soldiers from crossing the Pruth or the Danube?

* The preambles of the Treaties of 1840 and 1841 recognised the expediency of maintaining the Sultan's dominion, but there was nothing in the articles of either of those treaties which engaged the contracting parties to defend the empire from foreign invasion.

CHAPTER II.

CHAP. II.

The Usage which tends to protect the weak against the strong.

THE supreme Law or Usage which forms the safeguard of Europe is not in a state so perfect and symmetrical that the elucidation of it will bring any ease or comfort to a mind accustomed to crave for well-defined rules of conduct. It is a rough and wild-grown system, and its observance can only be enforced by opinion, and by the belief that it truly coincides with the interests of every Power which is called upon to obey it; but practically, it has been made to achieve a fair portion of that security which sanguine men might hope to see resulting from the adoption of an international code. Perhaps under a system ideally formed for the safety of nations and for the peace of the world, a wrong done to one State would be instantly treated as a wrong done to all. But in the actual state of the world there is no such bond between nations. It is true that the law of nations does not stint the right of executing justice, and that any Power may either remonstrate against a wrong done to another State great or small, or may endeavour, if so it chooses, to prevent or redress the wrong by force of arms; but the duties of States

in this respect are very far from being co-extensive with their rights. In Europe, all States except the five great Powers are exempt from the duty of watching over the general safety; and even a State which is one of the five great Powers is not practically under an obligation to sustain the cause of justice unless its perception of the wrong is reinforced by a sense of its own interests. Moreover, no State, unless it be combating for its very life, can be expected to engage in a war without a fair prospect of success. But when the three circumstances are present—when a wrong is being done against any State great or small, when that wrong in its present or ulterior consequences happens to be injurious to one of the five great Powers, and, finally, when the great Power so injured is competent to wage war with fair hopes—then Europe is accustomed to expect that the great Power which is sustaining the hurt will be enlivened by the smart of the wound, and for its own sake, as well as for the public weal, will be ready to come forward in arms, or to labour for the formation of such leagues as may be needed for upholding the cause of justice. If a Power fails in this duty to itself and to Europe, it suddenly becomes lowered in the opinion of mankind; and happily there is no historic lesson more true than that which teaches all rulers that a moral degradation of this sort is speedily followed by disasters of such a kind as to be capable of being expressed in arithmetic, and of being in that way made clear to even the narrowest understanding. The principle

CHAP. II.

on which the safeguard rests will not be acknowledged by all, but those who will disown it can be designated beforehand. There are many who cannot make out how society can justly be harsh upon a man for being tame under insult or injury; and the same class of moralists will encounter a like difficulty in their endeavour to understand the cogency and the worth of this Usage.

Instance of a wrong to which the Usage did not apply.

Perhaps the limit to which the Usage is subject may be best shown by first giving an example of circumstances in which it fails to take practical effect. When the Republic of Cracow was abolished by an arrangement concerted between Russia and Austria, a clear wrong was done, and France and England protested against it; but it could hardly be said that their interests were grievously affected by the change, and therefore it was not the opinion of Europe that the Western Powers had been guilty of a great dereliction of duty because on this account they declined to go to war.

Instance in which the Usage was applicable and was disobeyed.

But as an example of circumstances in which tame acquiescence would be clearly a breach of the great Usage and a defection from the cause of nations, one may cite the conduct of Prussia in 1805; for when the First Napoleon suddenly came to a rupture with Austria, and broke up from his camp at Boulogne and poured his armies into Germany, advancing upon Ulm and finally upon Vienna itself, all men saw that it was not only for the interest of Europe at large, but also for the interest of Prussia herself, that she should come forward to prevent the catastrophe. She hung

back and stood still whilst Austria succumbed; but acting thus, Prussia incurred the ill opinion of Europe; and the ruin which follows degradation did not at all lag, for in the very next year Bonaparte was issuing his decrees from Berlin, and the Prussians were yielding up their provinces and their strong places to France, and handing over their stores of gold and silver, and of food and clothing, to cruel French intendants, and French soldiery were quartered upon them at their hearths. A brave and warlike people had been brought down into this abyss because their rulers had shrunk from taking up arms in obedience to the great Usage; and Europe set it down and remembered that Prussia's dereliction of duty in 1805 was followed by shame and ruin in the autumn of 1806.

Instances in which the Usage was faithfully obeyed.

But if the wars of 1805 and 1806 supplied a signal instance of this kind of defection and of its speedy chastisement, they also furnished examples of loyal obedience to the great Usage. From the rupture of the peace of Amiens to the summer of 1805, Bonaparte was at peace with the Continent and at war with this country. During that interval of more than two years he bent his whole energy, and devoted the vast resources at his command, to the one object of invading and crushing England. It was against the interest of Europe that England should be ruined, but more especially it was for the interest of Austria that this disaster should be averted, because the great empire of the Danube is so situate that its interests are more closely iden-

By Austria.

CHAP II.

tical with the interests of England than with those of any other Power. Moreover, the indignation of Austria was whetted by seeing Bonaparte crowning himself at Milan and seizing Genoa. Therefore when Pitt turned to the Court of Vienna, he did not turn in vain. Supported by Russia and Sweden, Austria came forward in arms, and though she was for the time broken down by the disaster of Ulm, and the defeat of the Russian army at Austerlitz, her old ally was safe: nothing more was heard in those days of the invasion of England; and the islanders, relieved from the duty of mere literal self-defence, were set free to enter upon a larger scheme of action.* Thenceforth they defended England by toiling for the deliverance of Europe. The coalition of 1805 was shattered, but before it perished it had helped to secure the precious life of the nation which was destined to be the first to carry war into the territory of the disturber.

By Russia.

Again, in the same year it was perilous to Central Europe that Bonaparte should be having dominion in Germany; but also it was against the interest of Russia that this should be, and the defection of Prussia threw upon the Czar the burden of having to be foremost in the defence of Austria. Therefore, in 1805, the Emperor Alexander came forward with his army to the rescue, and in the following year he

* Of course it was the destruction of the French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar which prevented Bonaparte from resuming the idea of invading England, but that which caused him to abandon the enterprise which he had been planning for two years was the coalition. He broke up from the camp of Boulogne several weeks before the battle of Trafalgar.

refused to stand idle when Prussia was the victim, and again moved forward his armies; and although he was worsted at Austerlitz in striving to defend Austria, and although, after heroic struggles in defence of Prussia, he at last was vanquished at Friedland and was obliged to make peace, still his faithful and valorous efforts gained him so much of the respect of Europe, and even of his victorious adversary, that, beaten as he was, he was able to go to Tilsit and to negotiate with the great Conqueror of the day upon a footing which resembled equality.

By England.

It has fallen to the lot of England also to have some share of the honour which Europe bestows upon resolute defenders of right; for when Bonaparte wished to make himself master of Spain and Portugal, it was the interest of England to prevent this result if she could, and to endeavour to thwart and humble the French Emperor in the midst of his triumphs; but it was also for the interest of Europe that England should be able to do this. Nay, so crushing had been the disasters suffered by the Continental States that the glorious duty of standing foremost and alone in defence of the liberties of mankind was cast for a time upon England. The task might well seem a hard one, for all that the islanders could do was to send out in ships scanty bodies of troops, in order that the men, when they landed, might encounter the armies of the hitherto victorious Emperor. But England did not shrink from the undertaking. For more than six years she carried on the struggle, and during some three years of that

CHAP. II.

time she stood alone against Napoleon, for he had put down all the other nations which had sought to resist him, and during that evil time it seemed that the vanquished people of the Continent had no hope left except when they were telling one another in whispers that England remained mistress of the seas, and in the Peninsula was still fighting hard. Times grew better, and although Bonaparte still held the language of a great potentate, he had so mismanaged the resources of the heroic and warlike country which he ruled, that an English army with its Portuguese auxiliaries was able to invade and hold his territory; and whilst he still pretended to the Germans that he was a proud and powerful sovereign, Wellington unmasked the whole imposture of the 'French Empire' by establishing his army and his foxhounds in the south of France, and quietly hunting the country in the livery of the Salisbury hunt.* The effort had begun when Sir Arthur Wellesley landed upon the coast of Portugal in the year 1808, and it ended in 1814. In the spring of that last year, men of several nations were gathered together at the English headquarters in Toulouse; and it was put into the heart of a man whose name is unknown, but who spoke in the French tongue, to confer the loftiest title that ever was truthfully given to man. In a moment his words were seized as though they

* Larpent's 'Private Journal at Head-Quarters,' vol. ii. p. 105. Wellington established himself in France in November 1813. He sent back into the Peninsula his whole Spanish army because it plundered. The invasion of France by the Continental Powers took place in the beginning of the following year.

were words from on High, and the whole assembly with one voice saluted Wellington the 'Liberator of Europe.'* The loyal soldier shrank from the sound of a title not taken exact from the Gazette,† but the voice which had spoken was nothing less than the voice of grateful nations. If the fame of England had grown to this proportion, it was because she had faithfully obeyed the great Usage, and had come to be the main prop of the rights of others by firmly defending her own.

The practical working of the Usage.

The obligation imposed upon a great State by this Usage is not a heavy yoke, for after all it does no more than impel a Sovereign, by fresh motives and by larger sanctions, to be watchful in the protection of his own interests. It quickens his sense of honour. It warns him that if he tamely stands witnessing a wrong which it is his interest and his duty to redress, he will not escape with the reckoning which awaits him in his own dishonoured country, but that he will also be held guilty of a great European defection, and that his delinquency will be punished by the reproach of nations, by their scorn and mistrust, and at last, perhaps, by their desertion of him in his hour of trial. But, on the other hand, the Usage assures a Prince that if he will but be firm in coming forward to redress a public wrong which chances to be collaterally hurtful to his own State, his cause will be singularly ennobled and strengthened by the

* Larpent's 'Private Journal,' vol. ii. p. 267.

† Sir George Larpent (who was present) says that Wellington 'bowed confused,' and abruptly put an end to the scene.

CHAP. II.

acknowledgment of the principle that, although he is fighting for his own people, he is fighting also for every nation in the world which is interested in putting down the wrong-doer.

Of course neither this nor any other human law or usage can have any real worth except in proportion to the respect and obedience with which it is regarded; but since the Usage exacts nothing from any State except what is really for its own good as well as for the general weal, it is very much obeyed, and is always respected in Europe. Indeed a virtual compliance with the Usage is much more general than it might seem to be at first sight, for the known or foreseen determination of a great State to resist the perpetration of a wrong is constantly tending with great force to the maintenance of peace, and peace being much less remarkable than war, the very success with which the principle works prevents it from being conspicuous. And, certainly, when the Usage is faithfully obeyed, it is a strong safeguard, for the interests of different States being much intertwined, it commonly happens that a wrong done to a lesser State is in some way hurtful or dishonouring to one or other of the great Powers; and if the great Power which is thus aggrieved takes fire, as it ought to do, and determines to resist or avenge, it is generally able to embroil other States; and the result is that the Prince who is the wrong-doer finds himself involved in a war which—having a tendency to become greater and greater—can hardly be otherwise than formidable to him. It is

the apprehension of this result which is the main safeguard of peace. Any prince who might be inclined to do a wrong to another State casts his eyes abroad to see the condition of the great Powers. If he observes that they are all in a sound state, and headed by firm, able rulers, who are equal, if need be, to the duty of taking up arms, he knows that his contemplated outrage would produce a war of which he cannot foresee the scope or limit, and, unless he be a madman or a desperado desiring war for war's sake, he will be inclined to hold back. On the other hand, if he sees that any great nation which ought to be foremost to resist him is in a state of exceptional weakness, or under the governance of unworthy or incapable rulers, or is distracted by some whim or sentiment interfering with her accustomed policy, then, perhaps, he allows himself to entertain a hope that she may not have the spirit or the wisdom to perform her duty. That is the hope, and it may be said in these days it is the one only hope, which would drive a sane prince to become the disturber of Europe. To frustrate this hope—in other words, to keep alive the dread of a just and avenging war—should be the care of every statesman who would faithfully labour to preserve the peace of Europe. It is a poor use of time to urge a king or an emperor to restrain his ambition and his covetousness, for these are passions eternal, always to be looked for, and always to be combated. For such a prince the only good bridle is the fear of war. Of course it is right enough to appeal to this wholesome fear under

CHAP. II.

the courteous title of 'deference to opinion,' though in truth it is not for the ambitious disturber, but rather for those Princes who are showing signs of weakness and failing spirit, that the discipline of opinion is really needed. Happily this discipline is not often wanting, for the feelings of nations in regard to the toleration of a wrong coincide with the general weal; and if men cannot always shame a prince from being guilty of an ignominious defection, they at least take care that the fruit of his delinquency shall be bitter. Europe is severe and slow of forgiveness towards any great Power which, by shrinking from the defence of its own rights, has suffered a harm to be done to another State.

It will be seen by-and-by that, in defiance of the opinion of Europe, and without any colour of right, a great Power invaded the territory of a weaker neighbour; but any one who keeps in mind the principle of the great Usage will have the means of seeing what resources Europe had for repressing this act of violence, and will hold a clue for finding out the quarter to which men had a right to look for the commencement of resistance.

Aspect of Europe in reference to the Turkish Empire.

Policy of Austria.

The Power most exposed to harm from Russian encroachments upon European Turkey was Austria; for it was plain that, if her great neighbour of the North were to extend his empire in the direction of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia, and so come winding round her South-Eastern frontier, she would be brought into grievous danger; and her motives for watchfulness in this quarter were quickened by a

knowledge of the disturbing elements which existed in the border provinces, where the people were drawn towards Russia by the ties of religion and race, and even of language. If the prospect of the Czar's carrying his dominion to the shores of the Bosphorus was galling and offensive to the other Powers of Europe, the evil which such a change was calculated to bring upon Austria seemed hardly short of ruin. Moreover Austria, in her character as a representative of German interests, was charged to see that the Lower Danube, ordained by Nature to be the main outlet for the products of Central Europe, should not hopelessly fall under the control of the Northern Power. Thus upon Austria, before all other Powers, there attached the care of guarding against encroachments on the European provinces of the Sultan, and the cogency of this duty towards herself, towards Germany, and towards Europe, Austria has always acknowledged. When Turkey was invaded in 1828, Prince Metternich was the one statesman in Europe who strove to form a league for the defence of the Sultan; and it will be seen that, although the events of 1849 had tended to embarrass the free action of the Emperor Francis Joseph, the last war against the Sultan disclosed no change in Austrian policy. CHAP. II.

Over the councils of Prussia at this time the Court of St Petersburg had a dangerous ascendancy; but by his actual station as a leading member of the Confederation, and by his hopes of attaining to a still higher authority in Germany, the King was forced into accord with Austria upon all questions which Of Prussia.

CHAP. II.

touched the freedom of the Lower Danube, and it was certain that he would do all that he safely could to discourage schemes for the disturbance of the Ottoman Empire. Still he lived in awe of the Emperor Nicholas, and it was hard to say beforehand what course he would take if he should be called upon to choose between defection and war.

Of France.

Among the very foremost of the great Powers of Europe was France; and she was well entitled, if her rulers should so think fit, to use her strength against any potentate threatening to alter the great territorial arrangements of Europe; and especially it was her right to withstand any changes which she might regard as menacing to her power in the Mediterranean. But French statesmen have generally thought that, as the Mediterranean after all is only a part of the ocean, a new maritime Power in the Levant might be rather a convenient ally against England than a dangerous rival to France; and, upon the whole, it was difficult to make out, either from the nature of things or from the general course of her policy, that France had any deep interest in the integrity of the Sultan's dominions. At all events her interest was not of so cogent a sort as to oblige her to stand more forward than any of the other great Powers, or to bear, in any greater proportion than they might do, the charge of keeping the Ottoman Empire untouched. Indeed it was hard at that time to infer from the past acts of France that she had any settled policy upon the Eastern Question. She had clung with some steadi-

ness to the idea of establishing French influence in Syria; and from time to time during the last half-century she had been inclined to entangle herself in Egypt; but upon the question whether the elements constituting the Ottoman Empire should be kept together, she had generally seemed to be undecided; for, although she took part in the conservative arrangements of 1841, her conduct in the previous year, and at several other times of crisis, had disclosed no great reluctance on her part to see the empire dismembered. Upon the supposition, however, that she intended to pursue the policy which she afterwards avowed, and to concur in the endeavour to maintain the Sultan's dominions, her duty towards herself and to Europe required that she should herself refrain from disturbing the quiet of the East; and that in the event of any wrongful aggression by Russia upon the dominions of the Sultan, she should loyally range herself with such of the four great Powers as might be willing to check the encroachment by their authority, or, in last resort, by force of arms; but it was not at all incumbent upon France to place herself in the van; and it was not consistent with the welfare of her people that she should take upon herself a share of the European burthen disproportionate to her interest in the state of Eastern Europe. Nor was there at this time any reason to imagine that the country could be brought into strife, or engaged in warlike enterprises, without sufficient cause; for the institutions of France had not then shrivelled up into a system which sub-

CHAP. II.

ordinated the vast interests of the State to the mere safety and welfare of its ruler. The legislative power and the control of the supplies were in the hands of an Assembly freely elected; and both in the Chamber and in print men enjoyed the right of free speech. Also the executive power rested lawfully in the hands of ministers responsible to Parliament; and therefore, although the President, as will be seen, could do acts leading to mischief and danger, he could not bring France to a rupture with a foreign State unless war were really demanded by the interests or by the honour, or at least by the passions, of the country. And the people being peacefully inclined, and the interests and the honour of the country being carefully respected by all foreign States, France was not at that time a source of disturbance to Europe.

Of England.

Next to Austria, England was of all the great Powers the one most accustomed to insist upon the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire. It might be a complex task to prove that the rule of the English in Hindostan is connected with the stability of the Sultan's dominions in a far distant region of the world; but whether the theory of this curious inter-dependence be sound or merely fanciful, it is certain that the conquest of the shores of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles by one of the great Continental Powers would straiten the range of England's authority in the world, and, even if it did not do her harm of a positive kind, would relatively lessen her strength. The effect, too, of Russia's

becoming a Mediterranean Power could not be so clearly foreseen and computed as not to be a fitting subject of care to English statesmen. The people at large were not accustomed to turn their minds in this direction; but the 'Eastern Question,' as it was called, had become consecrated by its descent through a great lineage of Statesmen; and the traditions of the Foreign Office were reinforced by English travellers: for these men, going to Eastern countries in early life, and becoming charmed with their glimpse of the grand, simple, violent world that they had read of in their Bibles, used soon to grow interested in the diplomatic strife always going on at Constantinople; and then coming home, they brought back with their chibouques and their scymitars a zeal for the cause of Turkey which did not fail to find utterance in Parliament. In process of time the accumulated counsels of these travellers, coming in aid of diplomatists and statesmen, put straight the deflection which had been caused by a romantic sympathy with the Greek insurgents; and it may be said that after the year 1833 the Eastern policy of England was brought back into its ancient channel.

Abroad no one doubted that the maintenance of the Sultan's authority at Constantinople was of high concern to England; and indeed the bearing of the Eastern question upon English interests seemed even more clear and obvious to foreigners than to the bulk of our countrymen at home. At this time Lord John Russell was the Prime Minister; and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was Lord

CHAP. II.

Palmerston. It is true that during the last Russian invasion of Turkey in 1828, Lord Palmerston, then out of office, had taken part with Russia; but from the period of the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi in 1833 he had not swerved from the traditions of the Foreign Office; and upon the whole there was no fair ground for believing that under his counsels, and under the sanction of the then Prime Minister, Lord Aberdeen's acquiescent policy of 1829 would again be followed by England. It is true that strange doctrines were afloat; but after 1833 the Government had not forgotten that England was one of the great Powers of Europe, and had never confessed, by any unpardonable inaction, that this height and standing in the world gave their country mere rank and celebrity without corresponding duties. Upon the whole, there was not at this time any sound reason for doubting that England would pursue her accustomed policy with due resolution. Thus Europe was in repose; for, in general, when the world believes that England will be firm, there is peace; it is the hope of her proving weak or irresolute which tends to breed war.

Of the lesser States of Europe.

Of the lesser States of Europe there were some which, in the event of a war, might lean towards Russia, and more which would lean against her: and the divided opinion of the minor Courts of Germany might be reckoned upon by the Czar as tending to hamper the action of the leading States; but, upon the whole, the interests of the lesser Powers of Europe, and the means of action at their

command, were not of such a kind as to exert much weight in retarding or accelerating Russian schemes of encroachment upon Turkey.

This was the quiet aspect of Europe in relation to the Eastern question when an ancient quarrel between the monks of the Greek and the Latin Churches in Palestine began to extend to laymen and politicians, and even at last to endanger the peace of the world.

CHAPTER III.

CHAP. III.

Holy shrines.

THE mystery of holy shrines lies deep in human nature. For, however the more spiritual minds may be able to rise and soar, the common man during his mortal career is tethered to the globe that is his appointed dwelling-place; and the more his affections are pure and holy, the more they seem to blend with the outward and visible world. Poets, bringing the gifts of mind to bear upon human feelings, have surrounded the image of love with myriads of their dazzling fancies; but it has been said that in every country, when a peasant speaks of his deep love, he always says the same thing. He always utters the dear name, and then only says that he 'worships 'the ground she treads.' It seems that where she who holds the spell of his life once touched the earth—where the hills and the wooded glen and the pebbly banks of the stream have in them the enchanting quality that they were seen by him and by her when they were together—there always his memory will cling; and it is in vain that space intervenes, for imagination, transcendant and strong of flight, can waft him from lands far away till he lights upon

the very path by the river's bank which was blessed by her gracious step. Nay, distance will inflame his fancy, for if he be cut off from the sacred ground by the breadth of the ocean, or by vast, endless, desolate tracts, he comes to know that deep in his bosom there lies a secret desire to journey and journey far, that he may touch with fond lips some mere ledge of rock where once he saw her foot resting. It seems that the impulse does not spring from any designed culture of sentiment, but from an honest earthly passion vouchsafed to the unlettered and the simple-hearted, and giving them strength to pass the mystic border which lies between love and worship. For men strongly moved by the Christian faith it was natural to yearn after the scenes of the Gospel narrative. In old times this feeling had strength to impel the chivalry of Europe to undertake the conquest of a barren and distant land; and although in later days the aggregate faith of the nations grew chill, and Christendom no longer claimed with the sword, still there were always many who were willing to brave toil and danger for the sake of attaining to the actual and visible Sion. These venturesome men came to be called Pelerins or Pilgrims. At first, as it would seem, they were impelled by deep feeling acting upon bold and resolute natures. Holding close to the faith that the Son of God, being also in mystic sense the great God himself, had for our sakes and for our salvation become a babe, growing up to be an anxious and suffering man, and submitting to be cruelly tortured and killed by the hands of His own

CHAP. III.

creatures, they longed to touch and to kiss the spots which were believed to be the silent witnesses of His life upon earth, and of His cross and passion. And since also these men were of the Churches which sanctioned the adoration of the Virgin, they were taught, alike by their conception of duty and by nature's low whispering voice, to touch and to kiss the holy ground where Mary, pure and young, was ordained to become the link between God and the race of fallen man. And because the rocky land abounded in recesses and caves yielding shelter against sun and rain, it was possible for the Churches to declare, and very easy for trustful men to believe, that a hollow in a rock at Bethlehem was the Manger which held the infant Redeemer, and that a Grotto at Nazareth was the very home of the blessed Virgin.

Priests fastened upon this sentiment, and although in its beginning their design was not sordid, they found themselves driven by the course of events to convert the alluring mystery of the Holy Places into a source of revenue. The Mahometan invaders had become by conquest the lords of the ground; but since their own creed laid great stress upon the virtue of pilgrimage to holy shrines, they willingly entered into the feeling of the Christians who came to kneel in Palestine. Moreover, they respected the self-denial of monks; and it was found that, even in turbulent times, a convent in Palestine surrounded by a good wall, and headed by a clever Superior, could generally hold its own. It was to establishments of this kind that the pilgrim looked for aid and hospi-

tality, and in order to keep them up the priests imagined the plan of causing the votary to pay according to his means at every shrine which he embraced. Upon the understanding that he fulfilled that condition he was led to believe that he won for himself unspeakable privileges in the world to come; and thenceforth a pilgrimage to the holy shrines ceased to be an expression of enthusiastic sentiment, and became a common act of devotion.

But since it happened that, because of the manner in which the toll was levied, every one of the Holy Places was a distinct source of revenue, the prerogative of the Turks as owners of the ground was necessarily brought into play, and it rested with them to determine which of the rival Churches should have the control and usufruct of every holy shrine. Here, then, was a subject of lasting strife. So long as the Ottoman Empire was in its full strength, the authorities at Constantinople were governed in their decisions by the common appliances of intrigue, and most chiefly, no doubt, by gold; but when the power of the Sultans so waned as to make it needful for them to contract engagements with Christian sovereigns, the monks of one or other of the Churches found means to get their suit upheld by foreign intervention. In 1740, France obtained from the Sultan a grant which had the force of a treaty, and its Articles, or 'Capitulations,' as they were sometimes called, purported to confirm and enlarge all the then existing privileges of the Latin Church in Palestine. But this success was not closely pursued,

Contest for the possession of the shrines.

Patronage of Foreign Powers.

CHAP. III.

for in the course of the succeeding hundred years, the Greeks, keenly supported by Russia, obtained from the Turkish Government several firmans which granted them advantages in derogation of the treaty with France; and until the middle of this century France acquiesced.

Comparison between the claims of Russia and France.

In the contest now about to be raised between France and Russia, it would be wrong to suppose that, so far as concerned strength of motive and sincerity of purpose, there was any approach to an equality between the contending Governments. In the Greek Church the rite of pilgrimage is held to be of such deep import, that if a family can command the means of journeying to Palestine, even from the far distant provinces of Russia, they can scarcely remain in the sensation of being truly devout without undertaking the holy enterprise; and to this end the fruits of parsimony and labour, enduring through all the best years of manhood, are joyfully devoted. The compassing of vast distances with the narrow means at the command of a peasant is not achieved without suffering so great as to destroy many lives. This danger does not deter the brave pious people of the North. As the reward of their sacrifices, their priests, speaking boldly in the name of Heaven, promise them ineffable blessings. The advantages held out are not understood to be dependent upon the volition and motive of the pilgrim, for they hold good, as baptism does, for children of tender years. Of course every man who thus came from afar to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was the representative of many more

who would do the like if they could. When the Emperor of Russia sought to gain or to keep for his Church the holy shrines of Palestine, he spoke on behalf of fifty millions of brave, pious, devoted subjects, of whom thousands for the sake of the cause would joyfully risk their lives. From the serf in his hut even up to the great Czar himself, the faith professed was the faith really glowing in the heart, and violently swaying the will. It was the part of wise statesmen to treat with much deference an honest and pious desire which was rooted thus deep in the bosom of the Russian people.

On the other hand, the Latin Church seems not to have inculcated pilgrimage so earnestly as its Eastern rival; and if it did, it obtained but slight compliance with its precept; for whilst the Greek pilgrim-ships poured out upon the landing-place of Jaffa the multitudes of those who had survived the misery and the trials of the journey, the closest likeness of a pilgrim which the Latin Church could supply was often a mere French tourist, with a journal and a theory, and a plan of writing a book. It was true that the French Foreign Office had from time to time followed up those claims to protect the Latin Church in the East which had arisen in the times when the mistresses of the Most Christian kings were pious; but it was understood that by the course of her studies in the eighteenth century France had obtained a tight control over her religious feelings. Whenever she put forward a claim in her character as 'the eldest 'daughter of the Church,' men treated her demand

CHAP. III.

as political, and dealt with it accordingly; but as to the religious pretension on which it was based, Europe always met that with a smile. Yet it will presently be seen that a claim which tried the gravity of diplomatists might be used as a puissant engine of mischief.

Measures taken by the French President.

There was repose in the empire of the Sultan, and even the rival Churches of Jerusalem were suffering each other to rest, when the French President, in cold blood, and under no new motive for action, took up the forgotten cause of the Latin Church of Jerusalem, and began to apply it as a wedge for sundering the peace of the world.

The French Ambassador at Constantinople was instructed to demand that the grants to the Latin Church which were contained in the treaty of 1740 should be strictly executed; and since the firmans granted during the last century to the Greek Church were inconsistent with the capitulations of 1740, and had long been in actual operation, the effect of this demand on the part of the French President was to force the Sultan to disturb the existing state of repose, to annul the privileges which (with the acquiescence of France) the Greek Church had long been enjoying, to drive into frenzy the priesthood of the Greek Church, and to rouse to indignation the Sovereign of the great military empire of the North, with all those millions of pious and devoted men who, so far as regarded this question, were heart and soul with their Czar. 'The Ambas-'sador of France,' said our Foreign Secretary, 'was

'the first to disturb the status quo in which the matter rested. Not that the disputes of the Latin and Greek Churches were not very active, but that without some political action on the part of France those quarrels would never have troubled the relations of friendly Powers. If report is to be believed, the French Ambassador was the first to speak of having recourse to force, and to threaten the intervention of a French fleet to enforce the demands of his country. We should deeply regret any dispute that might lead to conflict between two of the great Powers of Europe; but when we reflect that the quarrel is for exclusive privileges in a spot near which the heavenly host proclaimed peace on earth and goodwill towards men—when we see rival Churches contending for mastery in the very place where Christ died for mankind—the thought of such a spectacle is melancholy indeed. . . Both parties ought to refrain from putting armies and fleets in motion for the purpose of making the tomb of Christ a cause of quarrel among Christians.'*

Still, in a narrow and technical point of view, the claim of France might be upheld, because it was based upon a treaty between France and the Porte which could not be legally abrogated without the consent of the French Government; and the concessions to the Greek Church, though obtained at the instance of Russia, had not been put into the form of treaty engagements, and could always be revoked at the pleasure of the Sultan. Accordingly

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 67.

CHAP. III.

M. de Lavalette continued to press for the strict fulfilment of the treaty; and being guided, as it would seem, by violent instructions, and being also zealous and unskilled, he soon carried his urgency to the extremity of using offensive threats, and began to speak of what should be done by the French fleet. The Russian Envoy, better versed in affairs, used wiser but hardly less cogent words, requiring that the firmans should remain in force; and since no ingenuity could reconcile the engagements of the treaty with the grants contained in the firmans, the Porte, though having no interest of its own in the question, was tortured and alarmed by the contending negotiators. It seemed almost impossible to satisfy France without affronting the Emperor Nicholas.

By the Russian Envoy.

Embarrassment of the Porte.

Mutual concessions.

The French, however, did not persist in claiming up to the very letter of the treaty of 1740, and on the other hand there were some of the powers of exclusion granted by the firmans which the Greeks could be persuaded to forego; and thus the subject remaining in dispute was narrowed down until it seemed almost too slender for the apprehension of laymen.

The actual subject of dispute.

Stated in bare terms, the question was whether, for the purpose of passing through the building into their Grotto, the Latin monks should have the key of the chief door of the Church of Bethlehem, and also one of the keys of each of the two doors of the sacred manger,* and whether they should be at liberty to place in the sanctuary of the Nativity a

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 84.

silver star adorned with the arms of France. The Latins also claimed a privilege of worshipping once a-year at the shrine of the Blessed Mary in the Church of Gethsemane, and they went on to assert their right to have 'a cupboard and a lamp in the tomb 'of the Virgin;' but in this last pretension they were not well supported by France; * and, virtually, it was their claim to have a key of the great door of the Church of Bethlehem, instead of being put off with a key of the lesser door, which long remained insoluble, and had to be decided by the advance of armies † and the threatening movement of fleets.

Diplomacy, somewhat startled at the nature of the question committed to its charge, but repressing the coarse emotion of surprise, 'ventured,' as it is said, 'to inquire whether in this case a key meant an in-'strument for opening a door, only not to be employed 'in closing that door against Christians of other sects, 'or whether it was simply a key—an emblem;' ‡ but Diplomacy answered, that the key was really a key—a key for opening a door; and its evil quality was—not that it kept the Greeks out, but that it let the Latins come in.

Increased violence of the French Government.

After the change which was wrought in the institutions of France in the night between the 1st and the 2d of December 1851, increased violence seems to have been imparted to the instructions under which M. de Lavalette was acting, and his demand was so urgently pressed, that the Porte at length

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 48.

† See Count Nesselrode's Despatches, ibid. p. 61. ‡ Ibid. p. 79.

CHAP. III.

gave way, and acknowledged the validity of the Latin claims in a formal Note;* but the paper had not been signed more than a few days, when the Russian Minister, making hot remonstrance, caused the Porte to issue a firman,† ratifying all the existing privileges of the Greeks, and virtually revoking the acknowledgment just given to the Latins. Thereupon, as was natural, the French Government became indignant, and to escape its anger the Porte promised to evade the public reading of the firman at Jerusalem;‡ but the Russian Minister not relaxing his zeal, the Turkish Government secretly promised him that the Pasha of Jerusalem should be instructed to try to avoid giving up the keys to the Latin monks.

Afif Bey's Mission.

Then again, under further pressure by France, the Porte engaged to evade this last evasion, and at length the duty of affecting to carry out the conflicting engagements thus made by the Porte was entrusted to Afif Bey. This calm Mahometan went to Jerusalem, and strove to temporise as well as he could betwixt the angry Churches. His great difficulty was to avert the rage which the Greeks would be likely to feel when they came to know that the firman was not to be read; and the nature of his little stratagem showed that, although he was a benighted Moslem, he had some insight into the great ruling principle of ecclesiastical questions. His plan was

* Note of the 9th February 1852.

† The firman of the mi-fevrier 1852.

‡ Col. Rose to Lord Malmesbury. 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 46.

CHAP. III.

to inflict a bitter disappointment upon the Latins in the presence of the Greek priesthood, for he imagined that in their delight at witnessing the mortification of their rivals, the Greeks might be made to overlook the great question of the public reading of the firman. So, as soon as the ceremonial visits had been exchanged, Afif Bey, with a suite of the local Effendis, met the three Patriarchs, Greek, Latin, and Armenian, in the Church of the Resurrection, just in front of the Holy Sepulchre itself, and under the great dome, and there he 'made an oration 'upon the desire of His Majesty the Sultan to gratify 'all classes of his subjects;' and when M. Basily and the Greek Patriarch and the Russian Archimandrite were becoming impatient for the public reading of the firman which was to give to their Church the whole of the Christian sanctuaries of Jerusalem, the Bey invited all the disputants to meet him in the Church of the Virgin near Gethsemane. There he read an order of the Sultan for permitting the Latins to celebrate a mass once a-year; but then, to the great joy of the Greeks, and to the horror of their rivals, he went on to read words commanding that the altar and its ornaments should remain undisturbed. 'No sooner,' says the official account, 'were these words uttered, than the Latins, 'who had come to receive their triumph over the 'Orientals, broke out into loud exclamations of the 'impossibility of celebrating mass upon a schismatic 'slab of marble, with a covering of silk and gold 'instead of plain linen, among schismatic vases, and

CHAP. III.

'before a crucifix which has the feet separated instead 'of one nailed over the other.' Under cover of the storm thus raised, Afif Bey perhaps thought for a moment that he had secured his escape, and for a while he seems to have actually disentangled himself from the Churches, and to have succeeded in gaining his quarters.

But when the delight of witnessing the discomfiture of the Latins had in some degree subsided, the Greeks perceived that, after all, the main promise had been evaded. The firman had not been read. M. Basily, the Russian Consul-General, called on Afif Bey, and required that the reading of the firman should take place. At first the Bey affected not to know what firman was meant, but afterwards he said he had no copy of it; and at length, being then at the end of his stratagems, he acknowledged that he had no instructions to read it. Thereupon M. Basily sent off Prince Garan to Jaffa to convey these tidings to Constantinople in any Arab vessel that could be found; and then, hurrying to the Pasha of Jerusalem, he demanded to have a special council assembled, with himself and the Greek Patriarch in attendance, in order that Russia and the Orthodox Church might know once for all whether the firman had been sent or not; but when the meeting was gathered, Hafiz Pasha only 'made a smooth speech on the well-known 'benevolence of His Majesty towards all classes of 'his subjects, and that was all that could be said.'*

* Consul Finn to Earl of Malmesbury, Oct. 27, 1852. 'Correspondence,' part i. p. 44.

So the Greeks, though they had been soothed for a moment by the discomfiture of their Latin adversaries in the Church of the Virgin, could not any longer fail to see that their rivals were in the ascendant, and it soon turned out that the promise to evade the delivery of the keys was not to be faithfully kept.

Delivery of the key and the star.

The pressure of France was applied with increasing force, and it produced its effect. In the month of December 1852, the silver star was brought with much pomp from the coast. Some of the Moslem Effendis went down to Jaffa to escort it, and others rode out a good way on the road that they might bring it into Jerusalem with triumph; and on Wednesday the 22d of the same month, the Latin Patriarch, with joy and with a great ceremony, replaced the glittering star in the sanctuary of Bethlehem, and at the same time the key of the great door of the church, together with the keys of the sacred manger, was handed over to the Latins.*

Indignation of Russia.

For the Czar and for the devout people of All the Russias it was hard to bear this blow. 'To the 'indignation,' Count Nesselrode writes, 'of the whole 'people following the Greek ritual, the key of the 'Church of Bethlehem has been made over to the 'Latins, so as publicly to demonstrate their religious 'supremacy in the East. The mischief then is done, 'M. le Baron, and there is no longer any question of 'preventing it. It is now necessary to remedy it. 'The immunities of the Orthodox religion which have 'been injured, the promise which the Sultan had

* Ibid., Dec. 28, 1852; but see Mr Pisani's note, p. 106.

CHAP. III.

'solemnly given to the Emperor, and which has been 'violated, call for an act of reparation. It is to ob- 'tain this that we must labour. If we took for 'our example the imperious and violent proceedings 'which have brought France to this result—if, like 'her, we were indifferent to the dignity of the Porte, 'to the consequences which an heroic remedy may 'have on a constitution already so shattered as that 'of the Ottoman Empire—our course would be already 'marked out for us, and we should not have long 'to reflect upon it. Menace and a resort to force 'would be our immediate means. The cannon has 'been called the last argument of kings, the French 'Government has made it its first. It is the argument 'with which, at the outset, it declared its intention to 'commence its proceedings at Tripoli as well as at 'Constantinople. Notwithstanding our legitimate 'causes of complaint, and at the risk of waiting 'some time longer for redress, we shall take a less 'summary course. . . . It may happen that France, 'perceiving any hesitation on the part of the Porte, 'may again have recourse to menace, and press upon 'it so as to prevent it from listening to our just de- 'mands. . . . The Emperor has therefore considered 'it necessary to adopt in the outset some precau- 'tionary measures in order to support our negotia- 'tions, to neutralise the effect of M. Lavalette's 'threats, and to guard himself in any contingency 'which may occur against a Government accustomed 'to act by surprises.' *

* Count Nesselrode to Baron Brunnow, 14th January 1853. Ibid. p. 61.

Advance of Russian forces.

Nor were these empty words. The same authentic page* which tells of this triumph of Church over Church goes on to show how the Czar was preparing for vengeance. 'Orders,' says Sir Hamilton Seymour, 'have been despatched to the 5th corps 'd'armée to advance to the frontiers of the Danubian 'provinces without waiting for their reserves, and 'the 4th corps, under the command of General 'Count Dannenburg, and now stationed in Volhynia, 'will be ordered to hold itself in readiness to march 'if necessary. General Luder's corps d'armée, ac-'cordingly, being now 48,000 strong, will receive a 'reinforcement of 24,000 men soon after its arrival 'at its destination; and supposing the 4th corps to 'follow, the whole force will amount at least, accord-'ing to official returns, to 144,000 men.'

Is it true that for this cause great armies were gathering, and that for the sake of the key and the silver star the peace of the nations was brought into danger? Had the world grown young once more?

The strife of the Churches was no fable, but after all, though near and distinct, it was only the lesser truth. A crowd of monks with bare foreheads stood quarrelling for a key at the sunny gates of a church in Palestine, but beyond and above, towering high in the misty North, men saw the ambition of the Czars.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 56.

CHAPTER IV.

CHAP. IV.

Natural ambition of Russia.

MEN dwelling amidst the snows of Russia are driven by very nature to grow covetous when they hear of the happier lands where all the year round there are roses and long sunny days. And since this people have a seabord and ports on the Euxine, they are forced by an everlasting policy to desire the command of the straits which lead through the heart of an empire into the midst of that world of which men kindle thoughts when they speak of the Ægean and of Greece, and the Ionian shores, and of Palestine and Egypt, and of Italy, and of France, and of Spain and the land of the Moors, and of the Atlantic beyond, and the path of ships on the Ocean. Gifted with the knowledge and the skill which are means of excellence in the diplomatic art, and excluded by their institutions from taking any but an official part in the home Government, the Russian nobles had long been accustomed to bend their minds to foreign policy, and the State, favouring this inclination, used to multiply the labours of its diplomatic service. Almost every gifted and accomplished Russian who might be travelling in foreign countries

used to receive instructions of some kind from his Government, and was enabled to believe that, either by collecting information or in some still more important way, he was performing a duty towards the State. Men thus intrusted became eager partakers of a policy rather more enterprising than the policy avowed by their Government, and the result was that the natural ambition of the country was always being nurtured and subserved by a great Aristocracy.

But, moreover, the ambition of the Statesmen and the Nobles was reinforced by the pious desire of the humbler classes. Some fifty millions of men in Russia held one creed; and they held it, too, with the earnestness of which Western Europe used to have experience in earlier times. In her wars Russia had always been engaged against nations which were not of her faith; and twice at least in the very agony of her national life, and when all other hope was gone, she had been rescued by the warlike zeal of her priesthood. By these causes love of country and devotion to the Church had become so closely welded into one engrossing sentiment, that good Muscovites could not sever the one idea from the other;* and although they were by nature a kind and good-humoured race of men, they were fierce in the matter of their religion. They had heard of Infidels who had torn down the crosses from the Churches of

* I owe my perception of the causes which rendered the Russian Church so intensely national to Arthur Stanley's most interesting work upon the Greek Church.

CHAP. IV.

Christ, and possessed themselves of the great city, the capital of the Orthodox Church; and, as far as they could judge, it would be a work of piety, with the permission of the Czar their father, to slaughter and extirpate the Turks. But this was not all. They knew that in the Turkish dominions there were ten or fourteen millions of men holding exactly the same faith as themselves, who were kept down in thraldom by the Moslems, and they had heard tales of the sufferings of these their brethren which seemed to call for vengeance. The very indulgence with which the Turks had allowed these Christians to have a distinct corporate existence in the Empire gave weight to their prayers; for, instead of being only a disorganised multitude of sufferers, they seemed to be, as it were, a suppliant nation, ever kneeling before the great Czar, and imploring him to deliver them from their captivity. It was not possible for the Russian people to conceive any enterprise more worthy of their nation and their Church than to raise high the banner of the Cross, drive the infidel Turks out of Europe, and cause the broad provinces in which their Christian brethren lived and suffered to be blended with 'Holy Russia.' It is true that the Muscovite peasants were not an enterprising race of men, and it might be hard perhaps to find a villager who, if he could have his choice, would rather be a soldier of the Cross than remain at home in his hut; but the people knew that, whether there were peace or whether there were war, the exigency of their Czar's military system would always go on consuming

their youth, and since this engine of a vast standing army was destined to be kept up and to be fed with their flesh and blood, they desired in their simple hearts that it should be used for a purpose which they believed to be holy and righteous. To a cause having all these sanctions the voice of prophecy could not be wanting. Seers foretold the destruction of the Turks by the men of the yellow hair.

Yet, vast as it was in its aggregate force, the heart's desire of a whole nation would have been vague and dim of sight if it had not some famed city for its goal, or some outward and visible figure or sign to which the multitude could point as the symbol of its great intent. The people were not without their goal nor without their symbol, for the city whither they tended was the imperial city of Constantine, once mistress of the world, and the Cross that the Emperor had seen in the heavens was still the sign in which the Church said they must conquer. For such as were the politic few there was the Golden Horn, with its command of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and all its fair promise of wealth and empire. In the horizon of the pious multitude there rose the dome of St Sophia. Ambition was sanctified by Religion. The most pious might righteously desire that the devotion of their militant Church should be aided by the wisdom of the serpent, and the most worldly-minded statesman could look with approval upon the scheme of a lucrative crusade. The Emperor Alexander the First, when he declared that for the time he was trying to withstand the

CHAP. IV.

ambition of his people, acknowledged that he was 'the only Russian who resisted the views of his 'subjects upon Turkey.'*

The Czar was the head of the Church. It was not without raising scruples in the minds of the pious that his predecessors had been able to attain ecclesiastical authority; but this shadow of doubt upon the title of the lay Pontiff made it all the more needful for him to take care that his zeal should be above reproach. It is true that the great body of the Muscovite people were simple and docile, not partaking in cares of Government, and that even among the most powerful Nobles there were none who would be unwilling to leave the choice of time and of measures to the Chief of the State; but still the religious mind of the vast empire would have been dangerously shocked if the priests had been forced to know that the Czar failed to share the pious desire of his people; and the minds of men accustomed to bend their thoughts to the aggrandisement of the nation would be overclouded and chilled if they saw that the Emperor was growing forgetful of their favourite cause.

But the prospect of what would follow upon the realisation of this scheme of ambition was dim. The sovereignty of European Turkey could scarcely be added to the possessions of the Czar without tending to dislocate the system of his empire; for plainly it would be difficult to sway the vast Northern territories of All the Russias by orders sent from the

* Quoted by Sir H. Seymour, 'Eastern Papers,' part v. p. 11.

Bosphorus, and yet, by force of its mere place in the world, Constantinople seemed destined to be the capital of a great State. Therefore, in the event of its falling into the hands of the Romanoffs, it may be thought more likely that the imperial city would draw dominion to itself, and so become the metropolis of some new assemblage of territories, than that it would sink into the condition of a provincial seaport. The statesmen of St Petersburg have always understood the deep import of the change which the throne of Constantine would bring with it; and it may be imagined that considerations founded on this aspect of the enticing conquest have mingled with those suggested by the physical difficulties of invasion, the obstinate valour of the Turks, and the hostility of the great Powers of Europe. Still, the prize was so unspeakably alluring to an aristocracy fired with national ambition, and to a people glowing with piety, that apparently it was necessary for the Czar to seem as though he were always doing something for furthering a scheme of conquest thus endeared to the nation. He was liable to be deemed a failing champion of the faith when he was not labouring to restore the insulted Cross to the Church of Constantine; he was chilling the healthy zeal of his ablest servants if he lived idle days making no approach to the Bosphorus.

Its irresolute nature.

Upon the whole, it resulted from the various motives tending to govern the policy of the State that the ambition of the Russian emperors in the direction of Constantinople was generally alive and

CHAP. IV.

watchful, and sometimes active, but was always irresolute. The First Napoleon said, in the early years of this century,* that the Czars were always threatening Constantinople and never taking it; and what he said then had already been true for a long time, and his words continued to be a true description of the Russian policy for half a century afterwards. Evidently it answered the purpose of the Czars to have it thought amongst their own people that they were steadily advancing towards the conquest, but they always suffered their reasons for delay to prevail. They had two minds upon the question. They were willing, but they were also unwilling, and this clashing of motives caused them to falter. At home they naturally tried to make their ambition apparent—abroad, as might be expected, they were more careful to display the inclinations forced upon them by prudence; but it would seem that this double face was not simply a deceptive contrivance, but resulted from imperfect volition. The project against Constantinople was a scheme of conquest continually to be delayed, but never discarded; and, happen what might, it was never to be endured that the prospect of Russia's attaining some day to the Bosphorus should be shut out by the ambition of any other Power.

Of course it followed that a great State ambition of this watchful but irresolute kind would be stimulated to an increased activity by the disappearance of any of the chief obstacles lying in the way of the enterprise; and especially this would be the case

* 'La Russie a trop menacé Constantinople sans le prendre.'

whenever the course of affairs seemed to be unfavourable to an alliance against Russia between the other great Powers of Europe.

The Emperor Nicholas.

The Emperor Nicholas held an absolute sway over his Empire, and his power was not moderated by the salutary resistance of ministers who had strength enough to decline to take part in acts which they disapproved. The old restraints which used sometimes to fetter the power of the Russian monarchs had fallen away, and nothing had yet come in their stead. Holding the boundless authority of an Oriental Potentate, the Czar was armed besides with all the power which is supplied by high organisation and the clever appliances of modern times. What he chose to do he actually did. He might be sitting alone and reading a despatch, and if it happened that its contents made him angry, he could touch a bell and kindle a war without hearing counsel from any living man. In the room where he laboured he could hear overhead the clicking of machinery, and he liked the sound of the restless magnets, for they were giving instant effect to his will in regions far away. He was of a stern, unrelenting nature. He displayed, when he came to be tried, a sameness of ideas and of language and a want of resource which indicated poverty of intellect; but this dearth within was masked by the brilliancy of the qualities which adorned the surface; and he was so capable of business, and had such a vast activity, that he was able to arrogate to himself an immense share of the actual governance of his subjects. Indeed, by

CHAP. IV.

striving to extend his management beyond the proper compass of a single mind he disturbed the march of business, and so far superseded the responsibility of his servants, that he ended by lessening to a perilous extent the number of gifted men who in former times had taken part in the counsels of the State. Still, this widely-ranging activity kept alive the awe with which his subjects watched to see where next he would strike; and made the nation feel that, along with his vast stature and his commanding presence, he carried the actual power of the State. He had been merciless towards the Polish nation; but whilst this sternness made him an object of hatred to millions of discomfited men, and to other millions of men who felt for them in their sorrows, it tended, perhaps, at the time to increase his ascendancy, by making him an object of dread, and it trebled the delight of being with him in his gentle mood. When he was friendly, or chose to seem so, there was a glow and frankness in his manner which had an irresistible charm. He had discarded in some measure his predecessor's system of governing Russia through the aid of foreigners, and took a pride in his own people, and understood their worth. In the great empire of the North religion is closely blended with the national sentiment, and in this composite shape it had a strong hold upon the Czar. It did not much govern him in his daily life, and his way of joining in the service of the Church seemed to disclose something like impatience and disdain, but no one doubted that faith was deeply rooted in his mind. He had the air of a

man raised above the level of common worshippers, who imagined that he was appointed to serve the cause of his Church by great imperial achievements, and not by humble feats of morality and devotion. It will be seen but too plainly that the Emperor Nicholas could be guilty of saying one thing and doing another; and it may be supposed, therefore, that at once and in plain terms he ought to be charged with duplicity; yet there are circumstances which make one falter in coming to such a conclusion. He had reigned, and had personally governed, for some seven-and-twenty years; and although during that period he had done much to raise bitter hatred, the most sagacious statesmen in Europe placed faith in his personal honour. It is certain that he had the love of truth. When he sought to speak of what he deemed fair and honourable, he travelled into our language for the word which spoke his meaning, and claimed to have the same standard of uprightness as an English 'gentleman.' It is known also that his ideal of human grandeur was the character of the Duke of Wellington. No man could have made that choice without having truth in him.

It would seem, however, that beneath the virtues which for more than a quarter of a century had enabled the Czar to stand before Europe as a man of honour and truth, there lurked a set of opposite qualities; and that when he reached the period of life which has often been found a trying one to men of the Romanoff family, a deterioration began to take place which shook the ascendant of his better nature.

CHAP. IV.

After the beginning of 1853 there were strange alternations in his conduct. At one time he seemed to be so frank and straightforward that the most wary statesmen could not and would not believe him to be intending deceit. Then, and even within a few hours, he would steal off and be false. But the vice which he disclosed in those weak intervals was not the profound deceit of statecraft, but rather the odd purposeless cunning of a gipsy or a savage, who shows by some sudden and harmless sign of his wild blood that, even after years of conformity to European ways, he has not been completely reclaimed. For the present, however, the Emperor Nicholas must be looked upon not merely as he was, but as he seemed to be; and what he seemed to be in the beginning of 1853 was a firm, righteous man, too brave and too proud to be capable of descending to falsehood.

Nicholas had a violent will; but of course when he underwent the change which robbed him of his singleness of mind, his resolves, notwithstanding their native force, could not fail to lose their momentum. He was a man too military to be warlike; and was not only without the qualities for wielding an army in the field, but was mistaken also as to the way in which the best soldiers are made: under his sway Russia was so oppressively drilled that much of the fire and spirit of enterprise which are needed for war was crushed out by military training. No man, however, could toil with more zeal than he did in that branch of industry which seeks to give uniformity and mechanic action to bodies of men. He was

an unwearied inspector of troops. He kept close at hand great numbers of small wooden images clothed in various uniforms, and one of the rooms in his favourite palace was filled with these military dolls.

The Emperor Nicholas had not been long upon the throne, when he showed that he was a partaker of the ambition of his people; for in 1828 he had begun an invasion of Turkey, and was present with his army in some of the labours of the campaign: but his experience was of a painful kind. The mechanical organisation in which he delighted broke down under stress of real war carried on upon an extended line of operations. In the country of the Danube his soldiery perished fast from sickness and want; and although he had so well chosen his time that the Sultan was without an ally, and (having but lately put to death his own army) was in an ill condition for war, still he encountered so much of obstinate and troublesome resistance from the Turks, and was so ill able to cope with it, that at the instance, as is said, of his own Generals, he retired from the scene of conflict, and went back to St Petersburg, with the galling knowledge that he was without the gifts which make an able commander in the field. He could not but see, too, that the military reputation of Russia was brought into great peril; and although in the following year he was rescued from the dangerous straits into which he had run, by the brilliant audacity of Diebitsch, by the skill of his diplomacy, and above all by indulgent fortune, still he was so chastened by the anxiety of the time, and

CHAP. IV.

by the narrowness of his escape from a great humiliation, that he ceased to entertain any hope or intention of dismembering Turkey, except in the event of there occurring a chain of circumstances which should enable him to act with the concurrence of other great Powers.

But the Emperor knew that the pride of his people would be deeply wounded if any great changes should take place in the Ottoman Empire without bringing gain to Russia and accelerating her march to Constantinople; and therefore he believed that, until he was prepared to take a part in dismembering the Empire, it was his interest to preserve it intact. For more than twenty years his actions as well as his declared intentions were in accordance with this view; and it would be wrong to believe that the policy thus shown forth to the world was only a mask. Just as the love of killing game generates a sincere wish to preserve it, so the very fact that the Czar looked upon Turkey as eventual booty, made him anxious to protect it from every other kind of danger. In 1833 the Emperor Nicholas saved the Sultan and his dynasty from destruction; and although he accompanied this measure with an act offensive to the other maritime Powers,* his conduct towards Turkey was loyal. In 1840 he again acted faithfully towards the Sultan, and joined with England and the leading Powers of Germany in preventing the disruption of the Ottoman Empire.

* The Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi.

In 1844 the Czar came to England, and anxiously strove to find out whether there were any of our leading statesmen who had grown weary of a conservative policy in Turkey. He talked confidentially with the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, and also, no doubt, with Sir Robert Peel; but evidently meeting with no encouragement, he covered his retreat by giving in his adhesion to England's accustomed policy, and to do this with the better effect, he left in our Foreign Office a solemn declaration not only of his own policy, but likewise, strange to say, of the policy of Austria; and all this he blended in a somewhat curious manner with words which might be read as importing that his views had obtained the sanction of the English Government. It would seem that our Government agreed, as they naturally would, to that part of the Czar's memorandum which was applicable to the existing state of things, and which, in fact, echoed the known opinion of England; and they also assented to the obvious proposition that the event of a breaking-up of the Ottoman Empire would make it important for the great Powers to come to an understanding amongst themselves; but it must be certain that the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Aberdeen refrained, as it is the custom of our Statesmen to do, from all hypothetical engagements. 'Russia and England,' said this Memorandum, 'are 'mutually penetrated with the conviction, that it is 'for their common interest that the Ottoman Porte 'should maintain itself in the state of independence

CHAP. IV.

'and of territorial possession which at present constitutes that Empire. Being agreed on this principle, 'Russia and England have an equal interest in uniting 'their efforts in order to keep up the existence of the 'Ottoman Empire, and to avert all the dangers which 'can place in jeopardy its safety. With this object, 'the essential point is to suffer the Porte to live in repose, without needlessly disturbing it by diplomatic 'bickerings, and without interfering, without absolute 'necessity, in its internal affairs.' Then, after showing that the tendency of the Turkish Government to evade treaties and ill-use its Christian subjects ought to be checked rather by the combined and friendly remonstrance of all the Powers than by the separate action of one, the Memorandum proceeded: 'If all 'the great Powers frankly adopt this line of conduct, 'they will have a well-founded expectation of preserving the existence of Turkey. However, they must 'not conceal from themselves how many elements of 'dissolution that Empire contains within itself. Unforeseen circumstances may hasten its fall. . . . In 'the uncertainty which hovers over the future, a 'single fundamental idea seems to admit of a really 'practical application: it is, that the danger which 'may result from a catastrophe in Turkey will be 'much diminished if, in the event of its occurring, 'Russia and England have come to an understanding 'as to the course to be taken by them in common. 'That understanding will be the more beneficial, inasmuch as it will have the full assent of Austria. 'Between her and Russia there exists already an entire 'accord.'

His policy from 1829 to 1853.

Upon the whole, it would seem that from the peace of Adrianople down to the beginning of 1853 the state of the Czar's mind upon the Eastern Question was this:—He was always ready to come forward as an eager and almost ferocious defender of his Church, and he deemed this motive to be one of such cogency that views resting on mere policy and prudence were always in danger of being overborne by it; but in the absence of events tending to bring this fiery principle into action, he was really unwilling to face the troubles which would arise from the dismemberment of Turkey, unless he could know beforehand that England would act with him. If he could have obtained any anterior assurance to that effect, he would have tried perhaps to accelerate the disruption of the Sultan's Empire; but as England always declined to found any engagements upon the hypothesis of a catastrophe which she wished to prevent, the Emperor had probably accustomed himself to believe that Providence did not design to allot to him the momentous labour of governing the fall of the Ottoman Empire. He therefore chose the other alternative, and not only spoke but really did much for the preservation of an Empire which he was not yet ready to destroy. Still, whenever any subject of irritation occurred, the attractive force of the opposite policy was more or less felt; for it is not every man who, having to choose between two lines of action, can resolve to hold to the one and frankly discard the other. In general, the principle governing such a conflict

CHAP. IV.

is found to be analogous to the law which determines the composition of mechanic forces, and the mental struggle does not result in a clear adoption of either of the alternatives, but in a mean betwixt the two. It was thus with the Emperor Nicholas whenever it happened that he was irritated by questions connected with the action of the Turkish Government. At such times his conduct, swayed in one direction by the notion of dismembering the Empire, and in the other direction by the policy of maintaining it, resulted in an endeavour to establish what the English Ambassador called 'a predominant influence over the counsels of the Porte, tending in the interest of absolute power to exclude all other influences, and to secure the means, if not of hastening the downfall of the Empire, at least of obstructing its improvement, and settling its future destinies to the profit of Russia, whenever a propitious juncture should arrive.'*

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 237.

CHAPTER V.

CHAP. V.

Troubles in Montenegro.

It happened that at a time* when the Emperor of Russia was wrought to anger by the triumph of the Latin over the Greek Church, there were troubles in one of the provinces bordering upon the Austrian territory, and Omar Pasha, at the head of a Turkish force, was operating against the Christians in Montenegro. The continuance of this strife on her frontier was no doubt alarming and vexatious to Austria; but with the Emperor Nicholas the tidings of a conflict going on between a Moslem soldiery and a Christian people of the Greek faith could not fail to kindle his religious zeal, and cause him to thirst for vengeance against the enemies of his Church. Of course the existence of this feeling on the part of the Czar was well understood at Vienna, and it was probably in order to anticipate his wishes, and to remove his motives for interference, that the Austrian Cabinet determined to address a peremptory summons to the Porte, calling upon the Sultan to withdraw his forces immediately from Montenegro. The Czar secretly but studiously represented that upon this and every other matter touching his policy

* The winter of 1852-3.

CHAP. V.

in Turkey he was in close accord with Austria.* This, however, the Austrian Government denies. Truthful men declare that the Czar was not even informed beforehand of the demand which Austria had resolved to press upon the Porte. It is certain, however, that the Czar determined to act as though he were in close concert with Austria. Count Leiningen was to be the bearer of the Austrian summons; and simultaneously with the Count's departure from Vienna, the Emperor Nicholas resolved to despatch to the Porte an Ambassador Extraordinary, who was to declare that a refusal to withdraw Omar Pasha's forces from Montenegro would be regarded by the Czar as a ground of war between him and the Sultan; and the Ambassador was also to be charged with the duty of obtaining redress for the change which had been made in the allotment of the Holy Sites to the contending Churches. It may seem strange that the Czar should propose to found a declaration of war upon a grievance which was put forward by the Cabinet of Vienna, and not by himself; but he was always eager to stand forward as the protector of Christians of his own Church who had taken up arms against their Moslem rulers; and when, as now, his conservative policy was disturbed by anger and religious zeal, his ulterior views upon the Eastern Question became too vague, and also, no doubt, too alarming, to admit of their being made the subject of a treaty engagement with Austria.

Count Leiningen's mission.

The Czar's plan of sending another mission to the Porte at the same time.

Apparently, then, the plan of the Emperor Nicho-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part v., in several places.

CHAP. V.

Plans of the Emperor Nicholas.

las was this:—he would make the rejection of Count Leiningen's demand a ground of war against the Porte, and then, acting under the blended motives furnished by the assigned cause of war and by his own separate grievance, he would avenge the wrong done to his Church by forcing the Sultan to submit to a foreign protectorate over all his provinces lying north of the Balkan. This, however, was only one view of the contemplated war. It might be applicable, if the occupation of the tributary provinces should evoke no element of trouble except the sheer resistance of the enemy; but the Czar, who did not well understand the Turkish Empire, was firmly convinced at this time that the approach of war would be followed by a rising of the Sultan's Christian subjects. On the other hand, he feared, and with better reason, that if the angry Moslems should deem the Sultan remiss or faint-hearted in the defence of his territory, they might rise against their Government and fall upon the Christian rayahs, whom they would regard as the abettors of the invasion. He could not fail to perceive that in the progress of the contemplated operations he might be forced by events to give a vast extension to his views against the Sultan; and that, even against his will, and without being prepared for the crisis, he might find himself called upon to deal with the ruins of the Ottoman Empire in the midst of confusion and massacre.

CHAPTER VI.

CHAP. VI.

Now, therefore, it became needful for the Emperor Nicholas to endeavour to divine the temper in which the other great Powers of Europe would be inclined to regard his intended pressure upon the Sultan, and the eventual catastrophe which, even if he should wish it, he might soon be unable to avert. It was of deep moment to him to know what help or acquiescence he might reckon upon, and what hostility he might have to encounter, if he should be called upon to take part in regulating the collapse of the Turkish Empire, and controlling the arrangements which were to follow.

Position of Austria in regard to Turkey at the beginning of 1853.

He looked around. The policy of one of the great States of Europe was bent out of its true course, and in others there were signs of weak purpose. The Power most deeply interested in preventing the dismemberment of European Turkey had already determined to press upon the Sultan an unjust and offensive demand; and although the statesmen of Vienna might have resolved in their own minds to stop short at some prescribed stage of the contemplated hostilities, it was plain that Austria, when

once engaged in war against the Sultan, would lose the standing-ground of a Power which undertakes to resist change, and would become so entangled by the mere progress of events, that it would be difficult for her to extricate herself and revert to a conservative policy. Indeed, the Emperor Nicholas might fairly expect that Austria, having committed the original mistake of disturbing the peace, would afterwards strive to cling to his friendship in the hope of being able to moderate his course of action, and avert or mitigate the downfall of the Turkish Empire.

Of Prussia.

With respect to Prussia, the Emperor Nicholas was free from anxiety. As long as the measures against the Sultan were carried on in alliance with Austria, the States of Germany had little ground for fearing that the interest which they had in the freedom of the Lower Danube would be forgotten; and this object being secured, or regarded as secure, Prussia had less interest in the fate of the Ottoman Empire than any of the other great Powers. There being, therefore, no reason of state obliging him to take a contrary course, it was to be expected that the King of Prussia would continue to live under the ascendancy which his Imperial brother-in-law had long been accustomed to maintain.

Of France.

France, having great military and naval forces, and a Mediterranean seabord, was well entitled to frame for herself any honest system of policy which she might deem to be the best guide for her conduct in Eastern affairs; but the time for her having a

CHAP. VI.

policy of her own had passed away, for she had fallen under the mere control of the Second Bonaparte; and in order to divine what France would do, it was necessary to make out what scheme of action her ruler would deem to be most conducive to his comfort and safety. Even the supposition that he would copy the First Napoleon gave no sufficing clue for saying what his Eastern policy ought to be, or what it was, or what it was likely to be in any future week. France, as wielded by a Bonaparte, had been known to the Sultan sometimes as a friendly Power, sometimes as a Power pretending to be friendly to him but secretly bargaining for the dismemberment of his empire; sometimes as a mere predatory State seizing his provinces in time of peace and without the pretence of a quarrel,* and sometimes even as a rival Mahometan Power—for it is known that the First Bonaparte did not scruple to call himself in Egypt a true Mussulman;† and although he now and then claimed to be 'the eldest son of the 'Catholic Church,' he first introduced himself in the Levant as the soldier of a nation which had 'renounced 'the Messiah.'

Upon the whole, there seemed to be no reason why the new French Emperor should refuse to join with Russia in trying to bring about the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, and to arrange the distribution of the spoil. Indeed, the great extension which

* *e. g.*, Bonaparte's predatory invasion of Egypt in time of peace.

† A falsified copy of the manifesto was sent to France. The one really issued represented Bonaparte as a Mahometan.

France had given of late to her navy, rendered views of this kind less chimerical than they were at the time of the Secret Articles of Tilsit. But, on the other hand, it was the French Government which had provoked the religious excitement under which Nicholas was labouring; and although it is believed that when his troubles increased upon him the Czar afterwards made overtures to France, it would seem that in the beginning of 1853 he was too angry and too scornful towards the French Emperor to be able to harbour the thought of making him his ally. Of the danger lest France should suddenly adopt a conservative policy, and undertake to resist his arrangements in the East of Europe, the Emperor Nicholas made light, for he had resolved at this time not to place himself in conflict with England; and the operations of any Western Power in Turkey being dependent upon sea-communications, he did not think it to be within the wide compass of possible events that France, single-handed and without the alliance of her maritime neighbour, would or could obstruct him in the Levant. 'He cared,' he said, 'very little 'what line the French might think proper to take in 'Eastern affairs; and he had apprised the Sultan that 'if his assistance were required for resisting the 'menaces of the French it was entirely at the service 'of the Sultan.'* 'When we (Russia and England) 'are agreed, I am quite without anxiety as to the 'West of Europe: it is immaterial what the others 'may think or do.'†

* 'Eastern Papers,' part v. p. 10. † Ibid., p. 1.

CHAP. VI.

Of England.

Seeming state of opinion there.

There remained, then, only England, and upon the whole it had come to this: that the Emperor Nicholas would feel able to meet the emergency occasioned by the downfall of the Sultan, and might perhaps be inclined to do a little towards bringing about the catastrophe, if beforehand he could come to an understanding with the English Government as to the way in which Europe should deal with the fragments of the Turkish Empire. But he had learned, as he said, that an alliance with England must depend upon the feeling of the country at large,* and this he strove hard to understand.

England had long been an enigma to the political students of the Continent, but after the summer of 1851 they began to imagine that they really at last understood her. They thought that she was falling from her place among nations; and indeed there were signs which might well lead a shallow observer to fancy that her ancient spirit was failing her. An army is but the limb of a nation, and it is no more given to a people to combine the possession of military strength with an unmeasured devotion to the arts of peace, than it is for a man to be feeble and helpless in the general condition of his body, and yet to have at his command a strong right arm for the convenience of self-defence. The strength of the right arm is as the strength of the man: the prowess of an army is as the valour and warlike spirit of the nation which gives it her flesh and blood. England, having suffered herself to grow forgetful of this truth,

* 'Eastern Papers,' part iii.

seemed, in the eyes of foreigners, to be declining. It was not the reduction of the military and establishments which was the really evil sign: for—to say nothing of ancient times—the Swiss in Europe, and some of the States of the North American continent, have shown the world that a people which almost dispenses with a standing army may yet be among the most resolute and warlike of nations; but there was in England a general decrying of arms. Well-meaning men harangued and lectured in this spirit. What they sincerely desired was a continuance of peace; but instead of taking the thought and acquiring the knowledge which might have qualified them to warn their fellow-countrymen against steps tending to a needless war, they squandered their indignation upon the deceased authors of former wars, and used language of such breadth that what they said was as applicable to one war as to another. At length they generated a sect called the 'Peace Party,' which denounced war in strong indiscriminate terms.

Moreover, at this time extravagant veneration was avowed for mechanical contrivances, and the very words which grateful nations had wrought from out of their hearts in praise of tried chiefs and heroes were plundered, as it were, from the warlike professions, and given to those who for their own gain could make the best goods. It was no longer enough to say that an honest tradesman was a valuable member of society, or that a man who contrived a good machine was ingenious. More was expected from those who had the utterance of the public feeling; and

CHAP. VI.

it was announced that 'glory' and 'honour'—nay, to prevent all mistake, 'true honour' and 'true glory' —were due to him who could produce the best articles of trade. At length, in the summer of 1851, it was made to appear to foreigners that this singular faith had demanded and obtained an outward sign of its acceptance, and a solemn recognition by Church and State. The foreigners were mistaken. The truth is that the English, in their exuberant strength and their carelessness about the strict import of words, are accustomed to indulge a certain extravagance in their demonstrations of public feeling; and this is the more bewildering to foreign minds because it goes along with practical moderation and wisdom. What the English really meant was to give people an opportunity of seeing the new inventions and comparing all kinds of patterns, but, above all, to have a new kind of show, and bring about an immense gathering of people. Perhaps, too, in the secret hearts of many who were weary of tame life there lurked a hope of animating tumults. This was all the English really meant. But the political philosophers of the Continent were resolved to impute to the islanders a more profound intent. They saw in the festival a solemn renouncing of all such dominion as rests upon force. England, they thought, was closing her great career by a whimsical act of abdication; and it must be acknowledged that there was enough to confound men accustomed to lay stress upon symbols. For the glory of mechanic Arts, and in token of their conquest over nature, a

cathedral of glass climbed high over the stately elms of Knightsbridge, enclosing them, as it were, in a casket the work of men's hands, and it was not thought wrong nor impious to give the work the sanction of a religious ceremony. It was by the Archbishop of Canterbury that the money-changers were brought back into the temple. Few protested. One man, indeed, abounding in Scripture, and inflamed with the sight of the glass Babel ascending to the skies, stood up and denounced the work, and foretold 'wars' and 'judgments.'* But he was a prophet speaking to the wrong generation, and no one heeded him. Indeed, it seemed likely that the soundness of his mind would be questioned; and if he went on to foretell that within three years England would be engaged in a bloody war springing out of a dispute about a key and a silver star, he was probably adjudged to be mad, for the whole country at the time felt sure of its peaceful temper. Certainly it was a hard task for the sagacity of a foreigner to pierce through these outward signs, and see that, notwithstanding them all, the old familiar 'Eastern Question' might be so used as to make it rekindle the warlike ardour of England. Even for Englishmen, until long after the beginning of 1853, it was difficult to foresee how the country would be willing to act in regard to the defence of Turkey; and the representatives of foreign Powers accredited to St James's might be excused if they assured their Courts that England was deep in pursuits which would hinder her from

* This I witnessed.

CHAP. VI.

all due assertion of her will as a great European Power.

Thus foreigners came to believe that the English nature was changed, and that for the future the country would always be tame in Europe; and it chanced that, in the beginning of the year 1853, they were strengthened in their faith by observing the structure of the Ministry then recently formed; for Lord Palmerston, whose name had become associated with the idea of a resolute and watchful policy, was banished to the Home Office, and the Prime Minister was Lord Aberdeen, the same statesman who had held the seals of the Foreign Office in former years, when Austria was vainly entreating England to join with her in defending the Sultan. The Emperor Nicholas heard the tidings of Lord Aberdeen's elevation to the premiership with a delight which he did not suppress. Yet this very event, as will be seen, was a main link in the chain of causes which was destined to draw the Czar into war, and bring him in misery to the grave.

But if there was a phantasy in vogue which seemed likely to make England acquiesce in transactions adverse to her accustomed policy in the East, there were other counsels afloat which, although they were based on very different views, seemed to tend in the same direction, for some of our countrymen were beginning to perceive that the restoration of a Bonapartist Empire in France would bring back with it the traditions and the predatory schemes of the First Napoleon. These advisers were unwilling that the

elements of the great alliance which, thirty-eight years before, had delivered Europe from its thraldom, should now be cast asunder for the mere sake of giving a better effect to the policy which the Foreign Office was accustomed to follow upon the Eastern Question. And in truth this same Eastern policy, though held by almost all responsible statesmen, was not so universally received in England as to go altogether unchallenged. The notion of England's standing still and suffering the Turks to be driven from Europe, was not deemed so preposterous as to be unworthy of being put forward by men commanding great means of persuasion; and before the new year* was far advanced, the Emperor Nicholas had means of knowing that the old English policy of averting the dismemberment of Turkey would be gravely questioned, and brought in an effective way to the test of printed discussion. Upon the whole, therefore, it seemed to the Czar that now, if ever, England might be willing to acquiesce in his encroachments upon Turkey, and even perhaps to abet him in schemes for the actual dismemberment of the Empire.

Sir Hamilton Seymour.

The Minister who represented the Queen at the Russian Court was Sir Hamilton Seymour. It is said that before there was a prospect of his being accredited at St Petersburg he had conceived a high admiration of the qualities of the Emperor Nicholas, and that this circumstance, becoming known to the Czar, tended at first to make the English Minister more than commonly welcome at the Imperial Court.

* 1853.

CHAP. VI.

Sir Hamilton was not so constituted as to be liable to the kind of awe which other diplomatists too often felt in the majestic presence of the Emperor; but his despatches show that he was much interested, and, so to speak, amused, by the conversation of a prince who wielded with his own very hand the power of All the Russias. Moreover, Sir Hamilton had the quickness and the presence of mind which enable a man to seize the true bearing and import of a sentence just uttered, and to meet it at the instant with the few and appropriate words which convey the needful answer, and provoke a still further disclosure.

On the night of the 9th of January 1853, the English Minister was at a party gathered in the palace of the Archduchess Helen, when the Emperor Nicholas approached him, and drew him into conversation.

His conversation with the Emperor.

'You know my feelings,' the Emperor said, 'with 'regard to England. What I have told you before I 'say again: it was intended that the two countries 'should be upon terms of close amity; and I feel sure 'that this will continue to be the case. . . . I repeat 'that it is very essential that the two Governments— 'that is, that the English Government and I, and I 'and the English Government—should be on the best 'terms; and the necessity was never greater than at 'present. I beg you to convey these words to Lord 'John Russell. When we are agreed, I am quite 'without anxiety as to the West of Europe; it is im- 'material what the others may think or do. As to 'Turkey, that is another question; that country is in

'a critical state, and may give us all a great deal of 'trouble. And now I will take my leave of you.' The Emperor then shook hands with Sir Hamilton Seymour, and believed that he had closed the conversation, but the skilled diplomatist saw and grasped his opportunity; and whilst his hand was still held by the Emperor, Sir Hamilton Seymour said, 'Sir, with 'your gracious permission, I would desire to take a 'great liberty.' 'Certainly,' His Majesty replied; 'what is it? let me hear.' Sir Hamilton said, 'I 'should be particularly glad that your Majesty should 'add a few words which may tend to calm the 'anxiety with respect to the affairs of Turkey which 'passing events are so calculated to excite on the 'part of Her Majesty's Government. Perhaps you 'will be pleased to charge me with some additional 'assurances of this kind.'

The Emperor's words and manner, although still very kind, showed that he had no intention of speaking to Sir Hamilton of the demonstration which he was about to make in the South. He said, however, at first with a little hesitation, but, as he proceeded, in an open and unhesitating manner: 'The affairs of 'Turkey are in a very disorganised condition; the 'country itself seems to be falling to pieces: the fall 'will be a great misfortune, and it is very important 'that England and Russia should come to a perfectly 'good understanding upon these affairs, and that 'neither should take any decisive step of which the 'other is not apprised.' The Envoy answered that this was certainly his view of the way in which

CHAP. VI.

Turkish questions should be treated; but the Emperor then said, as if proceeding with his remark, 'Stay, we have on our hands a sick man—a very 'sick man; it will be, I tell you frankly, a great misfortune if one of these days he should slip away 'from us, especially before all necessary arrangements 'were made. But, however, this is not the time to 'speak to you on that matter.'

On the 22d of January another interview took place between the Emperor and the English Envoy. 'I found His Majesty,' writes Sir Hamilton Seymour, 'alone; he received me with great kindness, saying 'that I had appeared desirous to speak to him upon 'Eastern affairs; that on his side there was no indisposition to do so, but that he must begin at a 'remote period. You know, His Majesty said, the 'dreams and plans in which the Empress Catherine 'was in the habit of indulging; these were handed 'down to our time; but while I inherited immense 'territorial possessions, I did not inherit those visions, 'those intentions if you like to call them so. On the 'contrary, my country is so vast, so happily circumstanced in every way, that it would be unreasonable 'in me to desire more territory or more power than 'I possess; on the contrary, I am the first to tell you 'that our great, perhaps our only danger, is that 'which would arise from an extension given to an 'Empire already too large.

'Close to us lies Turkey, and in our present 'condition nothing better for our interests can be 'desired. The times have gone by when we had any-

'thing to fear from the fanatical spirit or the military 'enterprise of the Turks; and yet the country is strong 'enough, or has hitherto been strong enough, to pre-'serve its independence, and to insure respectful 'treatment from other countries.

'Well, in that Empire there are several millions 'of Christians whose interests I am called upon to 'watch over, while the right of doing so is secured 'to me by treaty. I may truly say that I make a mo-'derate and sparing use of my right, and I will freely 'confess that it is one which is attended with obliga-'tions occasionally very inconvenient; but I cannot 'recede from the discharge of a distinct duty. Our 'religion, as established in this country, came to us 'from the East, and there are feelings as well as obli-'gations which never must be lost sight of.

'Now Turkey, in the condition which I have de-'scribed, has by degrees fallen into such a state of 'decrepitude that, as I told you the other night, 'eager as we all are for the prolonged existence of 'the man (and that I am as desirous as you can be 'for the continuance of his life, I beg you to believe), 'he may suddenly die upon our hands: we cannot 'resuscitate what is dead. If the Turkish Empire 'falls, it falls to rise no more; and I put it to you, 'therefore, whether it is not better to be provided 'beforehand for a contingency, than to incur the 'chaos, confusion, and the certainty of an European 'war, all of which must attend the catastrophe if 'it should occur unexpectedly, and before some ulte-'rior system has been sketched. This is the point to

CHAP. VI.

'which I am desirous you should call the attention 'of your Government.'

Sir Hamilton Seymour adverted to the objection which the English Government habitually felt to the plan of taking engagements upon possible eventualities, and said that disinclination might be expected in England to the idea of disposing, by anticipation, of the succession of an old friend and ally. 'The 'rule is a good one,' the Emperor replied—'good at 'all times, especially in times of uncertainty and 'change like the present; still it is of the greatest im- 'portance that we should understand one another, 'and not allow events to take us by surprise. Now I 'desire to speak to you as a friend and as a "gentle- 'man:" if England and I arrive at an understanding 'in this matter, as regards the rest it matters little to 'me; it is indifferent to me what others do or think. 'Frankly, then, I tell you plainly that if England 'thinks of establishing herself one of these days at 'Constantinople, I will not allow it. I do not attri- 'bute this intention to you, but it is better on these 'occasions to speak plainly. For my part, I am equally 'disposed to take the engagement not to establish 'myself there—as proprietor that is to say, for as oc- 'cupier I do not say: it might happen that circum- 'stances, if no previous provision were made, if every- 'thing should be left to chance, might place me in 'the position of occupying Constantinople.'

On the 20th of February the Emperor came up to Sir Hamilton Seymour at a party given by the Grand Duchess Hereditary, and in the most gracious manner

took him apart, saying he desired to speak to him. CHAP. VI.
'If your Government,' said the Emperor, 'has been 'led to believe that Turkey retains any elements of 'existence, your Government must have received in- 'correct information. I repeat to you that the sick 'man is dying, and we can never allow such an event 'to take us by surprise. We must come to some 'understanding.'

Then Sir Hamilton Seymour felt himself able to infer that the Czar had settled in his own mind that the hour for bringing about the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire must be at hand.

The next day the Emperor again sent for Sir Hamilton Seymour, and after combating the determination of the English Government to persist in regarding Turkey as a Power which might, and which probably would, remain as she was, he at length spoke out his long-reserved words of temptation. He thought, he said, that in the event of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, it might be less difficult to arrive at a satisfactory territorial arrangement than was commonly believed, and then he proceeded: 'The prin- 'cipalities are, in fact, an independent State under 'my protection: this might so continue. Servia 'might receive the same form of government. So 'again with Bulgaria: there seems to be no reason 'why this province should not form an independent 'State. As to Egypt, I quite understand the import- 'ance to England of that territory. I can then only 'say, that if, in the event of a distribution of the 'Ottoman succession upon the fall of the Empire,

CHAP. VI.

'you should take possession of Egypt, I shall have 'no objection to offer. I would say the same thing 'of Candia: that island might suit you, and I do 'not know why it should not become an English 'possession.'

'As I did not wish,' writes Sir Hamilton Seymour, 'that the Emperor should imagine that an English 'public servant was caught by this sort of overture, 'I simply answered that I had always understood 'that the English views upon Egypt did not go be-'yond the point of securing a safe and ready com-'munication between British India and the mother 'country. Well, said the Emperor, induce your 'Government to write again upon these subjects— 'to write more fully, and to do so without hesitation. 'I have confidence in the English Government. It 'is not an engagement, a convention, which I ask of 'them; it is a free interchange of ideas, and, in case 'of need, the word of a "gentleman;" that is enough 'between us.'*

Reception of the Czar's overtures by the English Government.

In answer to these overtures, the Government of the Queen disclaimed all notion of aiming at the possession of either Constantinople or any other of the Sultan's possessions, and accepted the assurances to the like effect which were given by the Czar. It combated the opinion that the extinction of the Ottoman Empire was near at hand, and deprecated the discussions based on that supposition as tending directly to produce the very result against which they were meant to provide. Finally, our Govern-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part v.

ment, with abundance of courtesy, but in terms very stringent and clear, peremptorily refused to enter into any kind of secret engagement with Russia for the settlement of the Eastern Question.

These communications of January and February 1853 were carried on between the Emperor of Russia and the English Government upon the understanding that they were to be held strictly secret; and for more than a year this concealment was maintained. It will be for a later page to show the ground on which the engagement for secrecy was broken, and the effect which the disclosure wrought upon the opinion of Europe, and upon the feelings of the people in England.

The Czar was baffled by the failure of his somewhat shallow plan for playing the tempter with the English Government; and an event which occurred at this same time still further conduced to the abandonment of his half-formed designs against the Sultan.

When Nicholas came to the singular resolution of declaring war against the Sultan in the event of his rejecting Austria's demand respecting Montenegro, he imagined, perhaps, that his counsels were kept strictly secret; but it seems probable that a knowledge or suspicion of the truth may have reached the Turkish Government, and helped to govern its decision. What is certain is, that the demand made by Austria was carried by Count Leiningen to Constantinople, and that, having been put forward in terms offensively peremptory, it was suddenly

Result of Count Leiningen's mission.

CHAP. VI.

acceded to by the sagacious advisers of the Sultan.

Its effect upon the plans of the Czar.

This contingency seems to have been unforeseen by the Emperor Nicholas; at first the tidings of it kindled in his mind strong feelings of joy, for he looked upon the deliverance of Montenegro as a triumph of his Church over the Moslem. But he soon perceived that this sudden attainment of the object to be sought would disconcert his plans. He found himself all at once deprived of the basis on which his scheme of action had rested; and except in respect of the question of the key and the silver star, there was nothing that he had to charge against the Sultan. On the other hand, he had failed in his endeavour to win over England to his views. He therefore relapsed into the use of the conservative language which he had been accustomed to apply to the treatment of the Eastern Question; professed his willingness to labour with England to prolong the existence of the Turkish Empire; and even went so far as to join with our Government in declaring that the way to achieve this result was to abstain 'from 'harassing the Porte by imperious demands, put for- 'ward in a manner humiliating to its independence 'and its dignity.'* He abandoned the intention of going to war, and even deprived himself of the means of taking such a step with effect; for immediately upon hearing the result of Count Leiningen's mission, he stopped the purchase of horses required for enabling him to take the field.

He abandons the idea of going to war.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part v. p. 25.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAP. VII.

BUT when a man's mind has been once thrown forward towards action, it gains so great a momentum that the ceasing of the motive which first disturbed his repose does not instantly bring him to a stand. The Czar had found himself suddenly deprived of his ground of war against the Porte by the embarrassing success of Count Leiningen's mission, and in the same week he was robbed of his last hope of the alliance which he most desired by the failure of his overtures to England. He gave up the idea of going to war, and policy commanded that for a while he should rest; but already he had so acted that rest was pain to him. He could not but be tortured with the thought that the furtive words which he had uttered to Sir Hamilton Seymour on the 21st of February were known to the Queen of England and to several of her foremost statesmen. Moreover, in a thousand forms, the bitter fruits of the delivery of the key and the star of Bethlehem, and the tidings of the triumph which the Latins had gained over his Church, and of the agony which this discomfiture had inflicted upon pious zealots, were coming

The pain of inaction.

CHAP. VII.

home upon him, and from time to time in a fitful way were tormenting him, and then giving him a little rest, and then once more rekindling his fury. So he began to turn this way and that, in order that by turmoil he might smother the past, win back the self-respect which he had lost, and gain some counter-victory for his Church. He had already gathered heavy bodies of troops in the south of his empire; he had a powerful fleet in the Euxine; the Bosphorus was nigh. The Turks, trusting mainly to heavenly power, were ill-prepared. No French or English fleets were in the Levant. Above all, that shady garden at Therapia, commanding the entrance of the Euxine, and seeming to be the fit dwelling-place for a Statesman who watched against invasion from the North, was no longer paced by the English Ambassador. The great Eltchi was away. Many thought it was possible for the Czar to seize the imperial city, and treat with the anger of Europe from the Seraglio Point.

But Nicholas, though he was capable of venturing a little way into wrong paths, and was often blinded to the difference between right and wrong by a sense of religious duty, was far from being a lawless prince. His conscience, warped by Faith, would easily reconcile him to an act of violence against a Mahometan Power; but he never questioned that the fate of Turkey was a matter of concern to other Christian States as well as to his own; and he did not at this time intend to take any steps which England would regard as an outrage. The plan which he resorted

The Czar's new scheme of action.

to as a means of giving vent to his anger, and satisfying that tendency to action which had been engendered by his preparations against the Sultan, was to go on with the scheme of sending an Extraordinary Embassy to Constantinople, to make up for the sudden loss of the Montenegro grievance by laying an increased stress upon the question of the Holy Places, and to force the Sultan to settle the dispute upon terms which, without wounding the Latins more than could be helped, should still do justice to the Greek Church. Any attempt at resistance which the Porte might make, by alleging the counter-pressure of France, was to be met by at once engaging that the Emperor of Russia with all his forces should defend the Sultan's territory against every attack by a Western Power; and well knowing that protective aid of such a kind was a burthen and not a gift, the Emperor seems to have directed that this alliance should be not merely offered, but pressed.

But the secret purpose of the mission was to make the past defaults of the Turkish Government in regard to the Holy Places of Palestine a ground for extorting a treaty engagement by which the Greek Church throughout all Turkey would be brought under the protection of Russia. It seemed to the Czar that his half-completed preparations for war would give to his demands exactly that kind of support which their offensive character required; for the position of the troops gathered in Bessarabia, and the activity of the last few months in Sebastopol,

CHAP. VII.

would not fail to make the Turks see that force was at hand. The armaments in readiness were more than enough for the occupation of the Danubian Principalities; and as soon as they should become swollen by the unfailing aid of rumours, they might easily grow to be thought a sufficing force for some great enterprise against Constantinople.

His choice of an Ambassador.

For some time the Emperor Nicholas hesitated in the choice of the person to whom this extraordinary mission should be intrusted. He hesitated between Count Orloff and Prince Mentschikoff. He did not hesitate because he was doubting which of the two men would be the fittest instrument of his policy, but rather because he had not determined what his policy should be. Count Orloff was a wise and moderate man, much associated with the Czar, and accustomed to speak to him with becoming freedom. To make choice of this trusty friend was to avoid any such outrage as would lead to the isolation of Russia. To choose Prince Mentschikoff was to choose a man whose feelings and prejudices might cause him to embitter the Czar's dispute with the Porte, and who, to say the least, could have no pretension to moderate the zeal of his master. It was for this very reason, perhaps, that he was preferred. In an evil hour Nicholas brought his doubts to an end, and made choice of Prince Mentschikoff.

Prince Mentschikoff.

Mentschikoff was a Prince of the sort which Court almanacs describe as 'Serene.' He was a General, a High Admiral, the Governor of a great province, and, in short, so far as concerns official and

titular rank, was one of the chief of the Czar's subjects; but Russia has not disclosed the grounds on which it was thought fit to intrust to him—first the peace, and then the military renown of his country; for when Russians are asked about the qualities of mind which caused a man to be chosen for a momentous embassy, and for the command of an army defending his country from invasion, they only say that the Prince was famous for the strange and quaint sallies of his wit. However, he was of the school of those who desired to govern the affairs of the State upon principles violently Russian, and without the aid and counsel of foreigners. It was understood that he held the Turks in contempt; and it was said also that he entertained a strong dislike of the English. He had not been schooled in diplomacy, but he was to be intrusted with the power of using a threatening tone, and was to be supported by a fleet held in readiness, and by bodies of troops impending upon the Turkish frontiers. The Emperor Nicholas seems to have thought that harsh words and a display of force might be made to supply want of skill. CHAP. VII.

Great latitude was given to Prince Mentschikoff in regard to the means by which he was to attain the objects of his mission; but it is certain that the general tenor of his instructions contravened with singular exactness the honourable and generous language in which the Emperor Nicholas loved to mark out the duty of the great Powers of Europe towards Turkey. In the last Secret Memorandum

CHAP. VII.

solemnly placed in the hands of our Envoy at St Petersburg as a record of the Emperor's determination, Nicholas, as we have seen, had laid it down that it was the duty of great Powers not 'to harass 'the Porte by imperious demands put forward in a 'manner humiliating to its independence and dig-'nity;' and yet these very words, which so well point out what the Czar said ought not to be done, are a close description of that which he ordered his Ambassador to do.

Mentschikoff at Constantinople.

The approach of Prince Mentschikoff to Constantinople was heralded by the arrival of staff officers, who were charged to prepare the way, and cause men to feel the import of the coming embassy. For many days rumour was busy. When for some time men's minds had been kept on the rack, it became known that the expected vessel of war was nearing the gates of the Bosphorus; and at length, surrounded with pomp, and supported by the silent menace of fleets equipped, and battalions marching on the Danube, Prince Mentschikoff entered the palace of the Russian embassy. The next day another war-steamer came down, bringing the Vice-Admiral Korniloff, the commander of the Black Sea fleet, and the Chief of the Staff of the land-forces under General Rudiger, with several other officers. All this war-like following went to show that the Ambassador had the control of the military and naval forces which were hovering upon the Turkish Empire. Then also came tidings that General Dannenburg, commanding the cavalry of the 5th corps d'armée,

had pushed his advance-guard close up to the frontiers of Moldavia; that funds had been transmitted to merchants in Moldavia and Wallachia for the purchase of rations; and, finally, that the fleet at Sebastopol was getting ready to sail at the shortest notice.

In the midst of the alarm engendered by these tidings, Prince Mentschikoff began the duties of his mission; and he so acted as to make men see that he was charged to coerce, and not to persuade. With his whole Embassy he went to the Grand Vizier's apartment at the Porte, but refused to obey the custom which imperatively required that he should wait upon Fuad Effendi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. With him, as it was understood, the Ambassador declined to hold intercourse. Fuad Effendi, the immediate object of the affront, was the ablest member of the Government. He instantly resigned his office. The Sultan accepted his resignation. There was a panic. It was understood that Prince Mentschikoff was going to demand terms deeply humiliating and injurious to the Sultan, and that a refusal to give way would be followed by an instant attack. The Grand Vizier believed that the mission, far from being of a conciliatory character, as pretended, was meant, on the contrary, 'to win some 'important right from Turkey, which would destroy 'her independence,' and that the Czar's object was 'to trample under foot the rights of the Porte and 'the independence of the Sovereign.'* In short, the Divan was so taken by surprise, and so overwhelmed

Panic in the Divan.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 88.

CHAP. VII.

by alarm, as to be in danger of going to ruin by the path of concession for the sake of averting a sudden blow. But there remained one hope — the English fleet was at Malta; and the Grand Vizier went to Colonel Rose, who was then in charge of our affairs at the Porte, and entreated that he would request our Admiral at Malta to come up to Vourla, in order to give the Turkish Government the support of an approaching fleet. Colonel Rose, being a firm, able man, with strength to bear a sudden load of responsibility, was not afraid to go beyond the range of common duty. He consented to do as he was asked; and although he was disavowed by the Government at home, and although his appeal to the English Admiral was rejected, it is not the less certain that his mere consent to call up the fleet allayed the panic which was endangering at that moment the very life of the Ottoman Empire. Happily there was not a complete perfect communication by telegraph between London and Constantinople; and long before the disavowal reached the Bosphorus the Turkish statesmen had recovered their usual calm. On the other hand, the Russian Government was much soothed by the intelligence that the English Cabinet had declined to approve Colonel Rose's request to the Admiral; and it might be said with truth, that both the act of the Queen's Representative and the disavowal of it by his Government at home were of advantage to the public service.*

Colonel Rose.

* Colonel Rose was the officer who afterwards became illustrious for his career of victory in India, but at that later time he was known to his grateful country as Sir Hugh Rose.

CHAP. VII.

It would seem that in the middle of the month of March the anger of the Emperor Nicholas had grown cool. He had always felt the difficulty of basing a war upon the question of the Holy Places alone, and the language of his Government at this time was moderate and pacific.* But unhappily there were distinct centres of action in Paris, in London, in St Petersburg, and in Constantinople, and it was constantly happening that when the fire seemed to be got down in three out of the four capitals, it would spring up with fresh strength in the fourth. Thus, at a moment when the panic of the Divan had entirely ceased, and when the Court of St Petersburg, already inclining towards moderation, was about to be further pacified by the welcome tidings which informed it of the disavowal of Colonel Rose by the Home Government, the Emperor of the French suddenly determined to send a naval force into the Levant, and notwithstanding the opposition of our Government, the French fleet was ordered to Salamis. This was done without sound reason, for the panic which had induced Colonel Rose to appeal to the English Admiral at Malta had long ago ceased. The step gave deep umbrage to Russia.

The Czar seemingly tranquilised.

The French fleet suddenly ordered to Salamis.

When the Emperor Nicholas learned that the advance of the French fleet had been disapproved by England, his anger was followed by gladness, and the relations between the Governments of St Petersburg and London then seemed to be upon so friendly

* Lord Cowley's account of Count Nesselrode's Despatch of the 15th March. 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 96.

29996

CHAP. VII.

The Czar's concealments.

a footing as to exclude the fear of a disagreement. Count Nesselrode assured Sir Hamilton Seymour that Russia was alleging no grievance against the Turkish Government except in regard to the question of the Holy Places; and even this one remaining subject of complaint he began to treat as a slighter matter than it had hitherto appeared to be. It is hard to have to believe that all this good-humour of the Court of St Petersburg was simulated; and yet the assurances of Count Nesselrode distinctly went to exclude the belief that Russia could ever do that which she was actually doing. Yielding, it would seem, to an instinct of wild cunning, the Czar failed to understand that the chance of carrying a point at Constantinople by a diplomatic surprise could never be of such worth as to deserve to be set against his old reputation for truthfulness. If he thought at all, he would see that the difference between what he was saying and what he was doing would be laid bare in three weeks. Yet he gave way to the strange impulse which forced him to go and try to steal a trophy for his Church. He concealed from the French as well as from our Government all knowledge of his intention to endeavour to extort from the Sultan an engagement giving to Russia the protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey. The Cabinets of the Western Powers were suffered to gather the first tidings of this scheme from their Constantinople despatches, and the trust which the English Government had hitherto placed in the honour and good faith of the Emperor Nicholas was suddenly and for ever destroyed.

CHAP. VII.

Mentschikoff's demands.

Meanwhile Prince Mentschikoff brought forward the claims of the Greek Church in regard to the Holy Places, but he seemed disposed to be moderate in his demands respecting the shrines, if the Turkish Government should show any willingness to give way to him in regard to the other and more important object which he was to endeavour to compass. Striving to take advantage of the alarm created by his Embassy, he proposed to wring from the Porte a treaty engagement, conceding to the Emperor of Russia a protectorate over the Greek Church in Turkey. At first he spoke darkly, intimating that he had some great demand to press upon the Sultan, but not yet choosing to say what the demand might be. Then he began to say to the Turkish Ministers that if they would appease the anger of the Czar, and deliver their State from danger, it would be well for them at once to turn away from France and England, trust themselves wholly to the generosity of the Emperor of Russia, and begin by giving a solemn assurance that they would withhold from the representatives of the Western Powers all knowledge of the negotiation which they were required to undertake. 'We are aware,' said the Grand Vizier, 'that the object of his (Prince Mentschi-
'koff's) mission is to make a secret treaty of alliance
'with us. He has not demanded it officially, but he
'has told some persons in his confidence, who (he
'knows) are in communication with us, that we do
'wrong to rely on the English and French Govern-
'ments, for experience should at length have proved

CHAP. VII.

'to us that we have lost much and gained nothing by 'following their policy and advice. By this language 'he seeks to gain their support and to insure their con- 'currence in the work of the secret treaty which he 'is seeking to conclude. His policy is most confused. 'At one time he would attract us to Russia by mild- 'ness, spreading abroad a report that the intentions 'of his Government are pacific. At another time he 'seeks to gain us over by pointing out the disadvan- 'tages and inutility of our reliance upon England and 'France, and how wrong we are in following the ad- 'vice of those two Powers, to whom we ought not to 'be attached, especially if we consider that the nature 'of their Constitution differs from that of ours, which, 'on the contrary, resembles that of Russia and Aus- 'tria. Prince Mentschikoff had a conference with 'Rifaat Pasha two days ago. He told him that 'before communicating to the Sublime Porte the 'nature of his mission, and the demands of his Govern- 'ment, and before giving any explanation, he required 'from Rifaat Pasha the formal promise of the Porte, 'that it would not communicate to the representative 'either of England or of France anything whatever 'as to what he demanded or proposed; that it was 'his wish that it should be treated with the greatest 'secrecy, otherwise he would not enter upon the 'subject.'*

The Grand Vizier declared that the Turkish Government had at once refused to withhold from the Western Powers a knowledge of the impending

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 111.

negotiation, but it seems likely that some alarmed member of the Turkish Government may have been led to give the required promise of secrecy, for before the end of March Prince Mentschikoff vouchsafed to disclose the offers and the demands of his Sovereign. He verbally expressed the Emperor's wish to enter into a secret treaty with Turkey, putting a fleet and 400,000 men at her disposal if she ever needed aid against any Western Power. As 'the 'equivalent for this proffered aid,' said the Grand Vizier, 'Russia further secretly demanded an addi- 'tion to the treaty of Kainardji, whereby the Greek 'Church should be placed entirely under Russian 'protection without reference to Turkey. Prince 'Mentschikoff had stated that the greatest secrecy 'must be maintained relative to this proposition, and 'that, should Turkey allow it to be made known to 'England, he and his mission would instantly quit 'Constantinople.' *

This kind of pressure upon the Turkish Government was perhaps well fitted for the days of alarm which immediately followed Prince Mentschikoff's arrival at Constantinople; but it was now the end of March, and it was so long ago as the 6th of the month that Colonel Rose, by requesting the English Admiral to come into the Levant, had been able to stop the panic. Rifaat Pasha, the Minister who had succeeded to Fuad Effendi in the Department of Foreign Affairs, was firm. 'I am not a child,' said he, in his message to Colonel Rose; 'I am an old

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 112.

CHAP. VII.

'Minister, very well acquainted with the treaties 'which unite the Sublime Porte with the friendly 'Powers; and I understand, God be praised! too well 'the importance of our good relations with England 'and France, the full weight of the obligation to 'maintain treaties, the whole extent of the evil which 'would result to my Government if it departs from 'or infringes them, to hesitate a single instant to in- 'form their respective representatives of every demand 'or proposal which Russia might be desirous of en- 'forcing upon us, and which might not be in accord- 'ance with the rights recorded in those treaties.'*

Finding himself thus encountered, and being unskilled in negotiation, Prince Mentschikoff had already begun to draw to himself the support of an army. The English Vice-Consul at Galatz reported that preparations had been made in Bessarabia for the passage of 120,000 men, and that battalions were marching to the South from all directions. Though the time of mere panic was past, there was 'anxiety and alarm' in the Divan.†

But Prince Mentschikoff was destined soon to learn that there was a power in the world which could exert more governance over Turkish Statesmen than the march of the Czar's battalions. Before the week was past he had to undergo the sensation of encountering a formidable mind.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 114. † Ibid. p. 124.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN a great country is induced, by virtue or by policy, to refrain from using her physical strength against the Sovereign of a weaker State, she often solaces herself for this painful effort of moderation by showing her neighbour the error of his ways and giving him constant advice; and if it happen that two or more great Powers are thus engaged in tendering their rival counsels to the same State, they will be prone to struggle with one another for the ascendancy, and to do this with a zeal scarcely intelligible to men who have never seen that kind of strife. The prize contended for is commonly known by the name of 'influence;' and although this moral sovereignty over foreign States may be a privilege of small intrinsic worth, the Princes and Statesmen who have once begun combating for the prize, and even the merchants and the travellers who have happened to be on the spot, and to witness with any attention the animating incidents of the conflict, have generally had their zeal kindled. Now the Ottoman polity is of such a nature as almost to court this kind of interference. The practice of suffering the Chris-

Foreign 'influence.'

Grounds for foreign interference in Turkey.

CHAP. VIII.

tian Churches to live and thrive separate and apart without being subjected to any attempt at amalgamation, has given to these communities so many of the privileges of distinct national existence that they long to make their independence still more complete, and to do this—not by attempting to lay their timid hands upon the government, but rather by becoming more and more separate, and at last dropping off from the Empire. Therefore, instead of harbouring schemes for rising in arms against the Sultan, they have accustomed themselves to seek to form ties of a political and religious kind with foreign States, and to appeal to them for protection against their Ottoman rulers. Here then, of course, a gaping cleft was open to receive the wedge which diplomatists call a 'Protectorate.' Russia claimed a moral right to protect the ten or fourteen millions of Turkish subjects who constituted the Greek Church, and she availed herself of some loose words which had crept into the old treaty of Kaínardji as a ground for maintaining that this moral claim was converted into a distinct right by treaty engagement. Austria, armed with treaties, was empowered to protect the Roman Catholic worship, but France had always been accustomed to busy herself in watching over that portion of the Latin Church which was connected with Palestine and Syria. It is true that the Armenian, the Coptic, and the Black Churches were without any recognised foreign patron, and flourished quite as well as their protected brethren; but the numbers composing these Churches were scanty in comparison with the wor-

shippers following the Greek ritual; and it may be said that the bulk of the Christian population of Turkey had contracted the habit of looking abroad for support.

Again, the Turkish Government was always so sensible of the distinctness of the 'nations' held under its sway, and of the hardship of keeping Christians under the close subjection of the Moslem system, that even in the times when the Sultans were in the pride of their strength they generously allowed humble foreigners, though living in Turkey, to have the protection of their country's flag, and to enjoy immunities which (except in the case of Sovereigns and their embassies) the Governments of Christian countries have never been accustomed to give to any of their foreign guests. These privileges had been granted to the principal States of Europe by treaty engagements which went by the name of 'capitulations;' and they were so extensive that, except in regard to one or two specified descriptions of crime and outrage, a foreigner in Turkey who was a native of any of the States to whom these capitulations had been granted, was exempt from the laws of the country in which he dwelt. And these privileges were not even confined to foreigners, for Ambassadors at the Porte claimed and exercised a right of withdrawing a Turkish subject from the laws of his country by taking him into their service, or even by a mere written grant of protection; and the streets of Pera and Galata were filled with Orientals of various races who had

CHAP. VIII.

contrived to be turned into 'Russians,' or 'Frenchmen,' or 'Englishmen.' Thus it resulted that not only the great communities forming Churches or 'nations,' but also a great number of individuals, often clever, stirring, and unscrupulous men, were always labouring to attract the interference of some great Power, furnishing it with ready grounds of dispute, and stimulating its desire for preponderance. But there was a broad difference between the protectorate of Russia and that of the other States of Europe; for whilst the Roman Catholic States could only reckon a few hundred thousand of clients, and whilst the Protestant subjects of the Porte were too few to form a body in the State, the number of Greek Christians who looked to Russia for protection amounted to from ten to fourteen millions. This fact gave great strength and substance to the pretensions of Russia, but, on the other hand, it made her interference in a high degree dangerous; for it was clear that if the guardianship of so vast a number of the Rayahs or Turkish subjects were to be suffered to lapse into the hands of a foreign Sovereign, the empire of the Sultans would pass away. All the great Powers of Europe were accustomed to press upon the Sultan the duty of conferring upon his people, and especially upon his Christian subjects, the blessing of good and equal government, but Russia urged these demands with the not unnatural desire to prepare for herself a firm standing-ground in the midst of her neighbour's territory; whilst Austria and England, being interested in averting the dismem-

berment of the Sultan's dominions, gave their counsel with a real view to make the Sultan do what they deemed to be for his own good. CHAP. VIII.

Rivalry between Nicholas and Sir Stratford Canning.

For ascendancy on this the favourite arena of diplomacy two men had long contended. They were altogether unequal in station, and yet were not ill matched. The first of the combatants was the Emperor Nicholas, the other was Sir Stratford Canning.

Sir Stratford Canning.

This kinsman of Mr Canning the Minister had been bred from early life to the career of diplomacy, and whilst he was so young that he could still perhaps think in smooth Eton Alcäics more easily than in the diction of 'High Contracting Parties,' it was given him to negotiate a treaty which helped to bring ruin upon the enemy of his country.* How to negotiate with a perfected skill never degenerating into craft, how to form such a scheme of policy that his country might be brought to adopt it without swerving, and how to pursue this always, promoting it steadily abroad, and gradually forcing the Home Government to go all lengths in its support, this he knew; and he was, moreover, so gifted by nature, that whether men studied his despatches, or whether they listened to his spoken words, or whether they were only by-standers caught and fascinated by the grace of his presence, they could scarcely help thinking that if the English nation was to be maintained in peace or drawn into war by the will of a single mortal, there

* The Treaty of Bucharest in 1812. By enabling the Czar to withdraw from the South the forces commanded by Tchitchagoff, this treaty did much to convert the discomfiture of Napoleon's 'Grand Army' into absolute ruin.

CHAP. VIII.

was no man who looked so worthy to fix its destiny as Sir Stratford Canning. He had faults which made him an imperfect Christian, for his temper was fierce, and his assertion of self was so closely involved in his conflicts that he followed up his opinions with his feelings, and with the whole strength of his imperious nature. But his fierce temper, being always under control when purposes of State so required, was far from being an infirmity, and was rather a weapon of exceeding sharpness, for it was so wielded by him as to have more tendency to cause dread and surrender than to generate resistance. Then, too, every judgment which he pronounced was enfolded in words so complete as to exclude the idea that it could ever be varied, and to convey, therefore, the idea of duration. As though yielding to fate itself, the Turkish mind used to bend and fall down before him.

But the counsels which Sir Stratford Canning had been accustomed to tender to the Sultan's Ministers, however wholesome they might be, were often very irksome to hear, and very difficult to adopt. Indeed it might be questioned whether his Turkish policy could be made to consist with the principle on which the Ottoman system was based. He sought to make the Ottoman rule seem tolerable to Christendom by getting rid of the differences which separated the Christian subjects of the Porte from their Mahometan fellow-subjects, and placing the tributaries on a footing with their masters. But the theory of Mahometan government rests upon the maintenance of a clear

separation from the unbelievers, and to propose to a Mussulman of any piety that the Commander of the Faithful should obliterate the distinction between Mahometans and Christians, would be proposing to obliterate the distinction between virtue and vice; the notion would seem to be not merely wrong and wicked, but a contradiction in terms. A virtuous Osmanlee would feel that, if he were to consent to this levelling of the barriers between good and evil, he would lose the whole merit and comfort of being a Turk. Perhaps the opposite policy—namely, that of widening the separation of the Christians, and giving them (under a tenure less precarious than the present one) the character of tributary municipalities—would be more consonant with the scheme of a Mussulman Empire, and therefore more susceptible of complete execution. But whether the reforms thus counselled were possible or not, it was hard to resist the imperious Ambassador to his face. If what he directed was inconsistent with the nature of things, then possibly the nature of things would be changed by the decree of Heaven, for there was no hope that the great Eltchi would relax his will. In the mean time, however, and by the blessing of God, the actual execution of the Ambassador's painful mandates might perhaps be suffered to encounter a little delay. So thought, so temporised, the wise tranquil statesmen at the Porte.

Of course this kind of ascendancy was often very galling to the Sultan's advisers. They knew that the English Ambassador was counselling them for

CHAP. VIII.

the good of their country; but they felt that he humbled them by making his dictation too plainly apparent, and they were often very conscious that the motive which made them succumb to him was dread. Yet, if the Ambassador was unrelenting and even harsh in the exercise of his dominion over the Turks, he was faithful to guard them against enemies from abroad. He chastened them himself, but he was dangerous to any other man who came seeking to hurt his children.

Now it happened that this was exactly the kind of ascendancy over the Turks for which the Emperor Nicholas had long been craving. Some men imagine that the Emperor's designs in regard to Turkey were steadily governed by sheer desire for his neighbour's land; and they are not without specious materials for forming such an opinion: but perhaps a full knowledge of the truth would justify the belief that, from the Peace of Adrianople in 1829 down to the time of his death, the Czar would have preferred the ascendancy which Sir Stratford Canning enjoyed at Constantinople to any scheme of conquest. And, what is more, if Nicholas had succeeded in gaining this ascendancy, he would have been inclined to use it as a means of enforcing counsels somewhat similar to those which were pressed upon the Sultan by the English Ambassador; for though his first care would have been always for his own Church, it would have suited his pride and his policy to extend his protection to all the Christian subjects of the Porte. But just as similarity of doctrine often embitters the dif-

ferences between contending sects, so the very resemblance between his and Sir Stratford Canning's views with regard to the Christian subjects of the Porte made it the more intolerable to him to see that he, the powerful neighbour of Turkey, who was able to hover over her frontiers and her shores with great armies and fleets, could never make an effort to force his counsels on the Porte without finding himself baffled or forestalled by the stronger mind. CHAP. VIII.

Even in his very early life it had been the fate of Sir Stratford Canning to have to resist and thwart the Russian Government; and during a great part of the years of his embassy at Constantinople he had been more or less in a posture of resistance to the Emperor Nicholas. Moreover, the feeling with which the Emperor carried on this long-standing conflict was quickened by personal animosity, and by a knowledge that diplomacy was watching the strife with interest and amusement; for he had once gone the length of declining to receive Sir Stratford Canning as the English Ambassador at St Petersburg, and had thus marked him out before Europe as his recognised antagonist. The struggle had lasted for a long time, and with varying success; for many a Turkish ministry owed its frail existence and its untimely end to the chances of the combat going on between the Czar and the English Ambassador. The Turks could not help knowing that the counsels of the Ambassador were for their own good, and they had reason to surmise that the advice of the Emperor might spring from opposite motives; but there are times when the

CHAP. VIII.

smooth speech and the wily promises of a political foe are more welcome than the painful lectures of an honest friend; and again, though it was hard to bear up with mere words against the personal ascendant of the Ambassador, the Emperor had the power of throwing the sword into the scale at any moment. The strife, therefore, had not been altogether unequal; but, upon the whole, Sir Stratford Canning had kept the upper hand, and the Czar had been forced to endure the agony of being what his representative called 'secondary,' so long as Sir Stratford Canning was in the palace of the English Embassy.

Lord Stratford instructed to return to Constantinople.

For almost two years Sir Stratford Canning had been absent from Constantinople; but now, at a time when Europe had fastened its eyes upon the Czar, and was watching to see how the Ambassador of All the Russias would impose his master's will upon Turkey, the Emperor Nicholas was obliged to hear that his eternal foe, travelling by the ominous route of Paris and Vienna, was slowly returning to his embassy at the Porte.

His instructions.

It was on the 25th of February 1853 that Lord Stratford de Redcliffe* was instructed to return to his former post. The measure was not without significance. Read by foreigners, it imported that England clung to her ancient policy, and was proceeding to maintain it; and although the instructions addressed to Lord Stratford disclosed no knowledge of the spirit in which Prince Mentschikoff was

* Sir Stratford Canning was created Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe in 1852.

about to conduct his embassy, or of the kind of proposals which he was about to press upon the Porte, they indicated that the Cabinet was alarmed for the fate of Turkey.

The despatch which supplied Lord Stratford with his instructions, announced to him that, in the then critical period of the fate of the Ottoman Empire, he was to return to his Embassy at Constantinople for a special purpose. Then, after recording once more the fact that the duty of maintaining the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire was a principle solemnly declared and acknowledged by all the great Powers of Europe, the despatch informed Lord Stratford that it was his mission to counsel prudence to the Porte, and forbearance to those Powers who were urging compliance with their demands. In Paris he was to remind the French Government that the interests of France and England in the East were identical, and was to explain the fatal embarrassment to which the Sultan might be exposed if unduly pressed by France upon a question of such vital importance to the Power from which Turkey had most to apprehend. At Vienna he was to give and elicit fresh declarations of the conservative views entertained by the two Governments. Then, proceeding to Constantinople, the Ambassador was to inform the Sultan that his Embassy was to be regarded as a mark of Her Majesty's friendly feelings towards His Highness, but also as indicating the opinion which Her Majesty entertained of the gravity of the circumstances in which there was reason to fear the

CHAP. VIII.

Ottoman Empire was placed. In regard to any part which he might be able to take in conducing to a settlement of the question of the Holy Places, the discretion of the Ambassador was left unfettered. The Ambassador was directed to warn the Porte that the Ottoman Empire was in 'a position of peculiar 'danger. The accumulated grievances of foreign 'nations,' continued Lord Clarendon, 'which the 'Porte is unable or unwilling to redress; the mal-'administration of its own affairs, and the increasing 'weakness of executive power in Turkey, have caused 'the allies of the Porte latterly to assume a tone 'alike novel and alarming, and which, if persevered 'in, may lead to a general revolt among the Christian 'subjects of the Porte, and prove fatal to the inde-'pendence and integrity of the Empire—a catas-'trophe that would be deeply deplored by Her 'Majesty's Government, but which it is their duty to 'represent to the Porte is considered probable and 'impending by some of the great European Powers. 'Your Excellency will explain to the Sultan that it 'is with the object of pointing out these dangers, 'and with the hope of averting them, that Her 'Majesty's Government have now directed you to 'proceed to Constantinople. You will endeavour to 'convince the Sultan and his Ministers that the 'crisis is one which requires the utmost prudence 'on their part, and confidence in the sincerity and 'soundness of the advice they will receive from 'you, to resolve it favourably for their future peace 'and independence.' Then (and probably at the sug-

gestion of Lord Stratford himself) the Ambassador was to press upon the Porte the adoption of the reforms which his intimate knowledge of the affairs of Turkey enabled him to recommend; and then, disclosing the effect already produced upon the mind of the Government by the challenge to which our accustomed policy in the East had just been subjected by the press, the despatch went on:—'Nor will you 'disguise from the Sultan and his Ministers that per- 'severance in his present course must end in alien- 'ating the sympathies of the British nation, and 'making it impossible for Her Majesty's Government 'to shelter them from the impending danger, or to 'overlook the exigencies of Christendom, exposed to 'the natural consequences of their unwise policy 'and reckless maladministration.' Finally, the Ambassador was told that, in the event of imminent danger to the existence of the Turkish Government, he was to despatch a messenger at once to Malta, requesting the Admiral to hold himself in readiness; but Lord Stratford was not to direct him to approach the Dardanelles without positive instructions from the Government at home.

Thus, so far as concerned the power of turning for aid to physical force, the Ambassador went out poorly armed; but he was destined to have an opportunity of showing that a slender authority in the hands of a skilled diplomatist may be more formidable than the absolute control of great armaments intrusted to a less able Statesman. Lord Stratford was licensed to do no more than send a

CHAP. VIII.

message to an Admiral, advising him to be ready to go to sea; and, slight as this power was, he never exhausted it; yet, as will be seen, he so wielded the instruction which intrusted it to him as to be able to establish a great calm in the Divan at a moment when Prince Mentschikoff was violently pressing upon its fears, with a fleet awaiting his orders, and an army of 140,000 men.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAP. IX.

Lord Stratford's return.

On the morning of the 5th of April 1853, the Sultan and all his Ministers learned that a vessel of war was coming up the Propontis, and they knew who it was that was on board. Long before noon the voyage and the turmoil of the reception were over, and, except that a frigate under the English flag lay at anchor in the Golden Horn, there was no seeming change in the outward world. Yet all was changed. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had entered once more the palace of the English Embassy. The event spread a sense of safety, but also a sense of awe. It seemed to bring with it confusion to the enemies of Turkey, but austere reproof for past errors at home, and punishment where punishment was due, and an enforcement of hard toils and painful sacrifices of many kinds, and a long farewell to repose. It was the angry return of a king whose realm had been suffered to fall into danger. Before a day was over, the Grand Vizier and the Reis Effendi had begun to speak, and to tell a part of what they knew to the English Ambassador. They did not yet venture to tell all. Things which they had

CHAP. IX.

told to Colonel Rose they did not yet dare to tell to the great Eltchi. They did not, perhaps, mean to conceal from him, but they shrank from the terror of seeing his anger when he came to know of Prince Mentschikoff's demands for a Protectorate of the Greek Church. If they were to confess that they had borne to hear such a proposal, the Eltchi might think that they had dared to listen to it. Lord Stratford, observing their fear, imagined that it was Prince Mentschikoff who had disturbed their equanimity. 'This combination,' said he, 'of alarm, 'seeking for advice, and of reluctance to intrust 'me frankly with the whole case, is attributable to 'the threatening language of Prince Mentschikoff, 'and to the character of his proposals.' But his view of the cause of this tendency towards suppression is displaced by observing the frankness of the disclosures which the Turkish Ministers had long before made to Colonel Rose: * the truth is that Lord Stratford was unconscious of exercising the ascendancy which he did, and, imagining that men gave way to him because he was in the right, he never came to understand the awe which he inspired. However, by degrees the Turkish Ministers went so far as to tell him that 'since the arrival of Prince Ments-'chikoff, the language held by the Russian Embassy 'to them had been a mixture of angry complaints 'and friendly assurances, accompanied with positive 'requisitions as to the Holy Places in Palestine, in-'dications of some ulterior views, and a general tone

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 107 *et seq.*

'of insistence bordering at times on intimidation.'* They declared that as to what the ulterior views were, 'there was still some uncertainty in the language 'of Prince Mentschikoff. In the beginning he had 'sounded the sentiments of the Porte as to a defensive 'alliance with Russia, but, receiving no encouragement, 'had desisted from the overture. His intentions were 'now rather directed to a remodelling of the Greek 'Patriarchate of Constantinople, to a more clear and 'comprehensive definition of Russian right under 'treaty to protect the Greek and Armenian subjects 'of the Porte in religious matters, and to the conclu-'sion of a formal agreement comprising those points.' Then, eager to place themselves under Lord Stratford's guidance, but still shrinking from a disclosure of the whole truth, the Turkish Ministers entreated the Ambassador to tell them how to meet the demands which, although they only spoke of them hypothetically, had been already made by Prince Mentschikoff.

CHAP. IX.

His plan of resistance to Mentschikoff's demands.

Lord Stratford instantly saw that he must cause the question of the Holy Places to be kept clear of all the other subjects of discussion which Prince Mentschikoff might be intending to raise, for it was plain that the vacillation of the Porte in regard to the sanctuaries (though it had sprung from a desire to avoid giving offence to either of two great Powers) had given Russia fair grounds of complaint on that subject; but the Czar had nothing else to complain of, and it was clear, therefore, that if the one grievance which really existed could be settled, every hostile step which

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 125.

CHAP. IX.

Russia might afterwards take would place her more and more in the wrong. 'Endeavour,' said Lord Stratford, in charging the Turkish Ministers, 'to keep 'the affair of the Holy Places separate from the ulte- 'rior proposals (whatever they may be) of Russia. The 'course which you appear to have taken under the 'former head was probably the best, and I am glad 'to find that there is a fair prospect of its success. 'Whenever Prince Mentschikoff comes forward with 'further propositions, you are at perfect liberty to 'decline entering into negotiation without a full 'statement of their nature, extent, and reasons. 'Should they be found on examination to carry with 'them that degree of influence over the Christian 'subjects of the Porte in favour of a foreign Power which might eventually prove dangerous or seri- 'ously inconvenient to the exercise of the Sultan's 'legitimate authority, His Majesty's Ministers cannot 'be doing wrong in declining them.'* But then, added the Ambassador—and his words portended some counsels hard to follow—this 'will not prevent 'the removal by direct sovereign authority of any 'existing abuse.'*

Gradually the Turkish Ministers told more, and on the 9th of April Lord Stratford knew that Russia was demanding a treaty engagement, giving her the protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey; and being now in communication with Prince Mentschikoff, he succeeded, as he believed, in penetrating the real object which Russia had in view. 'That object,' he

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 125.

said, 'was to reinstate Russian influence in Turkey 'on an exclusive basis, and in a commanding and 'stringent form.' In other words, Prince Mentschikoff, with horse and foot and artillery and the whole Sebastopol fleet at his back, was come to depose the man whom they called in St Petersburg 'the English 'Sultan.' On the other hand, Lord Stratford was not willing to be deposed. The struggle began.

Commencement of the struggle between Prince Mentschikoff and Lord Stratford.

The severance of the question of the Holy Places from the ulterior demands of the Czar was not an object to be pursued for the sake of order and convenience only. On the contrary, it bade fair to govern the result of the diplomatic conflict; for the Montenegro question having disappeared, and Russia having committed herself to the avowal that she had no complaints against the Sultan except in regard to the Holy Places, a settlement of that solitary grievance would leave the ulterior demand so baseless that any attempt to enforce it by arms would be a naked outrage upon the opinion of Europe. If Prince Mentschikoff had been a man accustomed to negotiate, he would have taken care to preserve the question of the Holy Places, and keep it blended with the ulterior demand until he saw his way to a successful issue; for he was in the position of having to found two demands upon one grievance, and it was clear, therefore, that he would be stranded if he allowed his one grievance to be disposed of without having good reason for knowing that his further demand would be granted; but he was vain and confident, and perhaps his sagacity was blunted by the

CHAP. IX.

thought that he was able to threaten an appeal to force. Moreover, Prince Mentschikoff was in the hands of a practised adversary.

Lord Stratford, knowing the full import of the decision towards which he was leading his opponent, did not fail to deal with him tenderly; and for several days the Prince had the satisfaction of imagining that the imperious and overbearing Englishman of whom they were always talking at St Petersburg was become very gentle in his presence. The two Ambassadors, without being yet in negotiation, began to talk with one another of the matters which were bringing the peace of the world into danger. They spoke of the Holy Places. Far from seeming to be hard or scornful in regard to that matter, Lord Stratford was full of deference to a cause which, whether it were founded on error or on truth, was still the honest heart's desire of fifty millions of pious men. He showed by his language that if by chance he should be called upon to use his good offices in this matter, or to mediate between Russia and France, he would form his judgment with gravity and with care. Where he could do so with justice, he admitted the fairness of the Russian claims.

Prince Mentschikoff's tone became 'considerably 'softened.'* Then the Ambassadors ventured upon the subject still more pregnant with danger, for Lord Stratford now disclosed his knowledge of Prince Mentschikoff's 'ulterior propositions relative to the 'protectorate of the whole Greek Church and the

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 134.

'priesthood in Turkey, and his conviction that they 'would meet with serious opposition from the Porte, 'and be regarded with little favour by Powers even 'the most friendly to Russia.'* Prince Mentschikoff tried to 'attenuate the extent and effect'† of his demands; and, on the other hand, Lord Stratford 'drew a clear line of distinction between the 'confirmation of special points already stipulated by 'treaty, and an extension of influence having the 'virtual force of a protectorate, to be exercised ex-'clusively by a single foreign Power, over the most 'important and numerous class of the Sultan's tri-'butary subjects;'† but by common consent the two Ambassadors 'avoided entering into a discussion 'which might have proved irritating upon this ques-'tion.'† Prince Mentschikoff, however, committed the diplomatic error of intimating 'that, notwith-'standing the great importance attached to it by 'his Government, there was no danger of any hostile 'aggression as the result of its failure, but at most 'an estrangement between the two Courts, and per-'haps, though it was not so said, an interruption of 'diplomatic relations.'†

That in these circumstances, and until he had succeeded in separating the question of the Holy Places, it was right for the English Ambassador to deal very temperately with the ulterior demands of the Czar, no diplomatist would doubt; and Lord Stratford acknowledges‡ that he carefully refrained

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 151. † Ibid. p. 139.

‡ Ibid. p. 134.

CHAP. IX.

from discussing the subject in a way tending to irritate, but the Russians imagine that he did more than abstain. They say that having been supplied with a copy of Prince Mentschikoff's draft of the convention, embodying his demands in respect to the Greek Church and Clergy, Lord Stratford struck out as inadmissible the clauses relating to the Greek Patriarch's tenure of office, and sending back the draft with that and with no other alteration, induced the Turkish Ministers (and through them induced the Russian Embassy) to suppose that he entertained no objection to the proposed convention except that which he had indicated by his erasure; and that Prince Mentschikoff, being in this belief, and being prepared to give way upon the question of the Greek Patriarch, had a right to expect Lord Stratford's acquiescence in that dangerous part of the Czar's demand which sought to establish a Protectorate over the Greek Church in Turkey. Nothing is more likely than that, in the process of endeavouring to penetrate Lord Stratford's intentions through the medium of the Turkish Ministers, Prince Mentschikoff may have received a wrong impression, and it is very likely that Lord Stratford in reading the draft may have at once struck out clauses which he regarded as totally inadmissible, reserving for separate discussion and for oral explanation the consideration of an ambiguous clause which, dangerous as it was, might easily be so altered as to become entirely harmless; but it is certain that there was never a moment in which Lord Stratford was

willing or even would have endured that any Protectorate over the Greek Church in Turkey should be ceded to Russia;* and no one versed in the spirit of English diplomacy, or having a just conception of Lord Stratford's nature, will be able to accept the belief that the Queen's Ambassador intended to overreach his antagonist by any misleading contrivance.

But whatever may have been the clue which led him into the wrong path, Prince Mentschikoff failed to see the danger in which he would place the success of his negotiation if he consented to let the question of the Holy Places be treated separately; and the angry despatches which now came in from St Petersburg† did not tend to divert him from his error. On the contrary, they tended to place him in hostility with France more distinctly than before; and since the question of the Holy Places was the one in which France and Russia were face to face, the Czar's Ambassador was not perhaps unwilling to enter upon a course which would place him for the time in distinct antagonism with France, and with France alone. He agreed to allow the question of the Holy Places to be treated first and apart from his other demands.

It must be acknowledged that, so far as concerned the question of the Holy Places, the demands made by Russia were moderate. Notwithstanding all the heat of his sectarian zeal, the Emperor Nicholas

* See Lord Stratford's Despatches, ibid. p. 127 *et seq.* to 151.

† 13th April.

CHAP. IX.

had seen that to endeavour to enforce a withdrawal of the privileges which had been granted with public solemnity to the Latin Church would be to outrage Catholic Europe; and it may be believed, too, that his religious feeling made him unwilling to exclude the people of other creeds from those Holy Sites which, according to the teaching of his own Church, it was good for Christians to embrace. But if the demands of the Russian Emperor in regard to the Holy Places were fair and moderate, he was resolved to be peremptory in enforcing them. And it seemed to him that in this matter he could not fail to have the ascendant, for his forces were near at hand. Also he had good right to suppose that France would be isolated, for it was not to be believed that England or any other Power would take a part or even acknowledge the slightest interest in a question between two sorts of monks.

On the other hand, the violent language of M. de Lavalette, his threats, the persistence of the French Government, and the advance of the Toulon fleet to the Bay of Salamis,—all these signs seemed to exclude the expectation that the French Government would easily give way. Here was an error. Zealous himself, the Russian Ambassador imagined a zeal in the Government and the Church to which he was opposing himself, and fancied that he saw in the French Ambassador's 'resistance a proof of 'the encroaching spirit of that Church which pro- 'claims itself universal, and looked for its real cause 'in the unceasing desire of the same Church to ex-

'tend the sphere of its action.'* He failed to see that his French antagonist might suddenly smile and throw off the cause of the Latin Church, and so rob the Czar of the signal triumph on which he was reckoning by the process of mere concession. CHAP. IX.

But whilst, to the common judgment of men who watched this haughty Embassy, it seemed that the Czar, in all the pride of strength and firm purpose, was descending on his prey, he was fulfilling the utmost hope of the patient enemy in the West, who had long pursued him with a stealthy joy, and was now keenly marking him down.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 139.

CHAPTER X.

CHAP. X.

State of the dispute respecting the Holy Places.

MEANTIME the course of events affecting the question of the Holy Places had shifted the grounds of dispute; for the solemn act performed at Bethlehem in the foregoing December had converted the claims of the Latins into established privileges; and the Emperor Nicholas, notwithstanding his religious excitement, had still enough wisdom to see that, although he might have been able to prevent this result by a violent use of his power at an earlier period, he could not now undo what was done. Without outraging Catholic Europe, and even, it may be believed, his own sense of religious propriety, he could not now wrench the key of the Bethlehem Church from the hands of the Latin monks, nor tear down the silver star from the Holy Stable of the Nativity. Therefore all that Prince Mentschikoff demanded in regard to the key and the star was a declaration by the Turkish Government that the delivery of the key implied no ownership over the principal altar of the Church; that no change should be made in the system of the religious ceremonies or the hours of service; that the guardianship of the Great

Gate should always be intrusted to a Greek priest; and, finally, that the silver star should be deemed to be a gift coming from the mere generosity of the Sultan, and conferring no sort of new rights.* In regard to the shrine of the Blessed Virgin at Gethsemane, Prince Mentschikoff required that the Greeks should have precedence at her tomb. He also insisted that the gardens of the Church of Bethlehem should remain in the joint guardianship of the Greeks and the Latins; and in demanding that some buildings which overlooked the terraces of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre should be pulled down, he required that the site of these buildings should never become the property of any 'nation,' but be walled off and kept apart as neutral ground. This last demand is curious. The Russian Government felt that even at Jerusalem it would be well to set apart one small shred of ground, and keep it free from the strife of the Churches.

But the last of Prince Mentschikoff's demands in regard to the Holy Places was the one most hard to solve. It has been said that in comparing the ways of men in the East with the ways of men in the West, there are found many subjects on which their views are not merely different, but opposite. One of these is the business of repairing churches. Whilst the English Churchmen were contending that they ought not to be laden with the whole burthen of keeping their sacred buildings in repair, the Christians in Palestine were willing to set the world in flames

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 129.

CHAP. X.

for the sake of maintaining their rival claims to the honour of repairing churches. The cupola of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem was out of order. The Greeks, supported by Russia, claimed the right to repair it. The Latins denied their right. The dispute raged. Then, as usual, the wise and decorous Turk stepped in between the combatants, and said he would repair the Church himself. This did not content the Greeks, and Prince Mentschikoff now demanded that the ancient rights of the Greeks to repair the great Cupola and Church at Jerusalem should be recognised and confirmed; and although he did not reject the Sultan's offer to supply the means for the repairs, he insisted that the work should be under the control of the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem.*

Some of these demands were resisted by France; and although M. de Lavalette had been long since recalled, M. de la Cour, who succeeded him, seemed inclined to be somewhat persistent, especially in regard to the question of the Cupola and the question of precedence at the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin.

It seems probable, however, that although M. de la Cour may have been sufficiently supplied with instructions touching the immediate question in hand, he had not perceived so clearly as his English colleague the dawn of the new French policy. From the communications of his own Government before he crossed the Channel, from his sojourn at Paris, and from the tenor of the despatches from England, Lord

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 129.

Stratford had gathered means of inferring that France no longer intended to keep herself apart from England by persisting in her pressure upon the Sultan; and, supposing that she had made up her mind to enter upon this new policy, Lord Stratford might well entertain a hope that the question whether a Greek priest should be allowed to control the repair of a Cupola at Jerusalem, or whether the doorkeeper of a Church should be a Greek or a Latin, would not be fought with undue obstinacy by the quickwitted countrymen of Voltaire. He spoke with M. de la Cour, and found that he was prepared for concession, if matters could be so arranged as to satisfy what Lord Stratford, in his haughty and almost zoological way, liked to call 'French feelings of 'honour.'*

Lord Stratford's measures for settling it.

By means of his communications with the Turks, the English Ambassador easily ascertained the points on which Prince Mentschikoff might be expected to be inexorable. These were:—the repair of the Cupola, the question of precedence at the Tomb of the Virgin, and the question about the Greek doorkeeper in the Church of Bethlehem. Furnished with this clue, Lord Stratford saw M. de la Cour, and dissuaded him from committing himself to a determined resistance on any of these three questions. He also gave his French colleague to understand that, in his opinion, the Greek pretension upon these three points stood on strong ground, and urged him to bear in mind the great European interests at stake, the declared

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 134.

CHAP. X.

moderation of the French Government, and the triumph already achieved by France in regard to the key and the silver star. And then Lord Stratford gave M. de la Cour a pleasing glimpse of the discomfiture into which their Russian colleague would be thrown if only the question of the Holy Places could be settled.* The French Ambassador soon began to enter into the spirit of these counsels.

On the other hand, Prince Mentschikoff was also willing to dispose of this question of the Holy Places; for he had now seen enough to be aware that he would not encounter sufficient resistance upon this matter to give him either a signal triumph or a tenable ground of rupture, and the angry despatches which he was receiving from St Petersburg made him impatient to press forward his ulterior demand. The two contending negotiators being thus disposed, it was soon found that the hindrances which prevented their coming to terms were very slender. But it often happens that the stress which a common man lays upon any subject of dispute is proportioned to the energy which he has spent in dealing with it, rather than to the real magnitude of the question itself; and when Prince Mentschikoff and M. de la Cour seemed to be approaching to a settlement, they allowed their minds to become once again so much heated by the strenuous discussions of small matters that 'the difficulty of settling the question of the 'Holy Places threatened to increase. The French 'and Russian Ambassadors insisted on their respec-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 155.

'tive pretensions, while the Porte inclined but hesi- CHAP. X.
'tated to assume the reponsibility of deciding between 'them.'* Then, at last, the hour was ripe for the intervention of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. 'I thought,' said he, 'it was time for me to adopt a more promi-'nent part in reconciling the adverse parties.'

He was more than equal to the task. Being by nature so grave and stately as to be able to refrain from a smile without effort and even without design, he prevented the vain and presumptuous Russian from seeing the minuteness and inanity of the things which he was gaining by his violent attempt at diplomacy. For the Greek Patriarch to be authorised to watch the mending of a dilapidated roof—for the Greek votaries to have the first hour of the day at a tomb—and, finally, for the doorkeeper of a church to be always a Greek, though without any right of keeping out his opponents,—these things might be trifles, but awarded to All the Russias through the stately mediation of the English Ambassador, they seemed to gain in size and majesty; and for the moment, perhaps, the sensations of the Prince were nearly the same as though he were receiving the surrender of a province or the engagements of a great alliance. On the other hand, Lord Stratford was unfailing in his deference to the motives of action which he had classed under the head of 'French feelings of honour;' and if M. de la Cour was set on fire by the thought that at the Tomb of the Virgin, or anywhere else, the Greek priests were to

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 157.

CHAP. X.

perform their daily worship before the hour appointed for the services of the Church which looked to France for support, Lord Stratford was there to explain, in his grand quiet way, that the priority proposed to be given to the Greeks was a priority resulting from the habit of early prayer which obtained in Oriental Churches, and not from their claim to have precedence over the species of monk which was protected by Frenchmen. At length he addressed the two Ambassadors; he solemnly expressed his hope that they would come to an adjustment. His words brought calm. In obedience, as it were, to the order of Nature, the lesser minds gave way to the greater, and the contention between the Churches for the shrines of Palestine was closed. The manner in which the Sultan should guarantee this apportionment of the shrines was still left open, but in all other respects the question of the Holy Places was settled.*

He settles it.

Terms on which it was settled.

According to the terms of the arrangement thus effected, the key of the Church of Bethlehem and the silver star placed in the Grotto of the Nativity were to remain where they were, but were to confer no new right on the Latins; and the doorkeeper of the Church was to be a Greek priest as before, but was to have no right to obstruct other nations in their right to enter the building. The question of precedence at the Tomb of the Blessed Virgin was ingeniously eluded by the device before spoken of; for the priority given to the Greeks was treated as though it resulted from a convenient arrangement of hours

* April 22, 1853. 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 157.

rather than from any intent to grant precedence; and it was accordingly arranged that the Greeks should worship in the Church every morning immediately after sunrise, and then the Armenians, and then the Latins, each nation having an hour and a half for the purpose. Perhaps it was in order to hinder the outgoing worshippers from coming into conflict with those who were about to begin their devotions that the gentle Armenians were thus interposed between the two angry Churches. The gardens of the Convent of Bethlehem were to remain, as before, under the joint care of the Greeks and Latins. With regard to the Cupola of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, it was arranged that it should be repaired by the Sultan in such a way as not to alter its form; and if, in the course of the building, any deviation from this engagement should appear to be threatened, the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem was to be authorised to remonstrate, with a view to guard against innovation. The buildings overlooking the terraces of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre were to have their windows walled up, but were not to be demolished, and therefore no effect could be given to the Russian plan of setting apart a neutral ground to be kept free from the dominion of both the contending Churches. All these arrangements were to be embodied in firmans addressed by the Sultan to the Turkish authorities at Jerusalem.*

Thus, after having tasked the patience of European diplomacy for a period of nearly three years,

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 248.

CHAP. X. the business of apportioning the holy shrines of Palestine between the Churches of the East and of the West was brought at last to a close. The question was perhaps growing ripe for settlement when Lord Stratford reached Constantinople, but whether it was so or not, he closed it in seventeen days. For the part which he had taken in helping to achieve this result he received the thanks of the Turkish Government and of the Russian and the French Ambassadors. The Divan might well be grateful to him, and he deserved, too, the thanks of his French colleague; for, having more insight into the new policy of the French Government than M. de la Cour, he was able to place him in the path which turned out to be the right one. But when Lord Stratford received the thanks of Prince Mentschikoff, he felt perhaps that the gravity which had served him well in these transactions was a gift which was still of some use.

CHAPTER XI.

CHAP. XI.

WHILST the question of the Holy Places was approaching the solution which was attained on the 22d of April, Prince Mentschikoff went on with his demand for the protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey; but the character of his mission was fitfully changed from time to time by the tenor of his instructions from home. On the 12th of April, the peaceful views which had prevailed at St Petersburg some weeks before were still governing the Russian Embassy at Constantinople; and Lord Stratford was able to report that the altered tone and demeanour of Prince Mentschikoff corresponded with the conciliatory assurances which Count Nesselrode had been giving in the previous month to Sir Hamilton Seymour. But on the following day all was changed. Fresh despatches came in from St Petersburg. They breathed anger and violent impatience, and of this anger and of this impatience the causes were visible. It was the measure adopted in Paris, several weeks before, which had rekindled the dying embers of the quarrel at St Petersburg, and the torch was now brought to Constantinople. It has been seen that, without reason, and without communication

Peaceful aspect of the negotiation.

Angry despatches from St Petersburg.

CHAP. XI.

Cause of the change.

with the English Ministers* (though it professed to be acting in unison with them), the French Government had ordered the Toulon fleet to approach the scene of controversy by advancing to Salamis; and it was whilst the indignation roused by this movement was still fresh in the mind of the Emperor Nicholas that the despatches had been framed. Moreover, at the time of sending off the despatches, the Czar knew that by the day they reached the shores of the Bosphorus, the man of whom he never could think with temper or calmness would already be at Constantinople, and he of course understood that, in the way of diplomatic strife, his Lord High Admiral the Serene Prince Governor of Finland was unfit for an encounter with Lord Stratford. He seems, therefore, to have determined to extricate his Ambassador from the unequal conflict by putting an end to what there was of a diplomatic character in the mission, and urging him into a course of sheer violence, which would supersede the finer labours of negotiation.

Inferred tenor of the fresh despatches.

From the change which the despatches wrought in Prince Mentschikoff's course of action, from the steps which he afterwards took, and from the known bent and temper of the Czar's mind, it may be inferred that the instructions now received by the Russian Ambassador were somewhat to this effect:—'The 'French fleet has been ordered to Salamis. The 'Emperor is justly indignant. You must bring 'your mission to a close forthwith. Be peremptory 'both with the French and the Turks. If the

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 98.

'French Ambassador is obstinate enough upon the 'question of the Holy Places to give you a tenable 'ground on which you can stand out, then hasten at 'once to a rupture upon that business without further 'discussion about our ulterior demands. But if the 'French Ambassador throws no sufficing difficulties 'in the way of the settlement of the question of the 'Holy Places, then press your demand for the pro- 'tectorate of the Greek Church. Press it peremp- 'torily. In carrying out these instructions, you 'have full discretion so far as concerns all forms and 'details, but in regard to time the Emperor grants 'you no latitude. You must force your mission to 'a close.' By the time you receive this despatch 'Stratford Canning will be at Constantinople. He 'has ever thwarted His Majesty the Emperor. The 'inscrutable will of Providence has bestowed upon 'him great gifts of mind, which he has used for no 'other purpose than to baffle and humiliate the Em- 'peror, and keep down the Orthodox Church. In 'negotiation, or in contest for influence over the 'Turks, he would overcome you and crush you, but 'his instructions do not authorise him to be more 'than a mere peaceful negotiator. You, on the con- 'trary, are supported by force. He can only per- 'suade; you can threaten. Strike terror. Make the 'Divan feel the weight of our preparations in Bess- 'arabia and at Sebastopol. Dannenburg's horsemen 'are close upon the Pruth. When the Emperor re- 'members the position of the 4th and the 5th corps 'd'armée, and the forwardness of his naval prepara-

CHAP. XI.

'tions, he conceives he has a right to expect that you 'should instantly be able to take the ascendant over 'a man who, with all his hellish ability, is after all 'nothing more than the representative of a country 'absorbed in the pursuit of gain. The Emperor can- 'not and will not endure that his Representative, 'supported by the forces of the Empire, should re- 'main secondary to the English Ambassador. Again 'the Emperor commands me to say you must strike 'terror. Use a fierce insulting tone. If the Turks 'remain calm, it will be because Stratford Canning 'supports them. Therefore demand private audiences 'of the Sultan, and press upon his fears. If your 'last demands, whatever they may be, are rejected, 'quit Constantinople immediately with your whole 'suite, and carry away with you the whole staff of 'our Legation.'

Mentschikoff's demand for a protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey.

On the day after receiving his despatches Prince Mentschikoff had a long interview with Rifaat Pasha, and strove to wrench from him the assent of the Turkish Government to the terms already submitted to the Porte as the project for a secret treaty. And although it happened that in the course of the negotiations on this subject Russia submitted to accept many changes in the form or the wording of the engagement which she required, it may be said with accuracy that, from the first to the last, she always required the Porte to give her an instrument which should have the force of a treaty engagement, and confer upon her the right to insist that the Greek Church and Clergy in Turkey should con-

CHAP. XI.

tinue in the enjoyment of all their existing privileges. It was clear, therefore, that if the Sultan should be induced to set his seal to any instrument of this kind, he would be chargeable with a breach of treaty engagements whenever a Greek bishop could satisfy a Russian Emperor that there was some privilege formerly enjoyed by him or his Church which had been varied or withdrawn. It was plain that for the Sultan to yield thus much would be to make the Czar a partaker of his sovereignty. This seemed clear to men of all nations, except the Russians themselves; but especially it seemed clear to those who happened to know something of the structure of the Ottoman Empire. The indolence or the wise instinct of the Mussulman rulers had given to the Christian 'nations' living within the Sultan's dominions many of the blessings which we cherish under the name of 'self-government;' and since the Greek Christians had exercised these privileges by deputing their bishops and their priests to administer the authority conceded to the 'nation,' it followed that the spiritual dominion of the priesthood had become blended with a great share of temporal power. So many of the duties of prefects, of magistrates, of assessors, of collectors, and of police were discharged by bishops, priests, and deacons, that a protectorate of these ecclesiastics might be so used by a powerful foreign Prince, as to carry with it a virtual sovereignty over ten or fourteen millions of laymen.

Effect which would be produced by conceding it.

All this had been seen by Lord Stratford and by the Turkish Ministers; and when Prince Mentschikoff

The negotiations which fol-

CHAP. XI.

lowed the demand.

pressed the treaty upon Rifaat Pasha he was startled, as it would seem, by the calmness and the full knowledge which he encountered. 'The treaty,' said Rifaat Pasha, 'would be giving to Russia an exclusive pro-'tectorate over the whole Greek population, their 'clergy, and their Churches.'*

The Prince, it would seem, now began to know that he had to do with the English Ambassador, for he made the alteration before adverted to in the draft of his treaty, and on the 20th of April read it in its amended shape to Lord Stratford, and assured him that it was only an explanatory guarantee of existing treaties, giving to the co-religionists of Russia what Austria already possessed with regard to hers. Lord Stratford on that day had approached to within forty-eight hours of the settlement of the question of the Holy Places, which he deemed it so vital to achieve; and it may be easily imagined that, in the remarks which he might make upon hearing the draft read, he would abstain with great care from irritating discussion, and would not utter a word more than was necessary for the purpose of fairly indicating that his postponement of discussion on the subject of the ulterior demands was not to be mistaken for acquiescence; but all that for that purpose was needed he fairly said, for he observed to Prince Mentschikoff 'that the Sultan's promise to protect 'his Christian subjects in the free exercise of their 'religion differed extremely from a right conferred 'on any foreign Power to enforce that protection, and

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 153.

'also that the same degree of interference might be 'dangerous to the Porte, when exercised by so power- 'ful an empire as Russia on behalf of ten millions of 'Greeks, and innocent in the case of Austria, whose 'influence derivable from religious sympathy was con- 'fined to a small number of Catholics, including her own subjects.' * These remarks were surely not ambiguous; but it seems probable that Prince Mentschikoff, misled by his previous impression as to what Lord Stratford really objected to, may have imagined that the proposed convention in its altered form would not be violently disapproved by the English Ambassador. At all events, he seems to have instructed his Government to that effect.

On the 19th of April the Russian Ambassador addressed his remonstrances and his demands to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in the form of a diplomatic Note. In the first sentence of this singular document Prince Mentschikoff tells the Minister for Foreign Affairs that he must have 'seen the 'duplicity of his predecessor.' In the next he tells him he must be 'convinced of the extent to which 'the respect' due to the Emperor had been disre- 'garded, and how great was his magnanimity in 'offering to the Porte the means of escaping from 'the embarrassments occasioned to it by the bad 'faith of its Ministers;' and then, after more objurgation in the same strain, and after dealing in a peremptory way with the question of the Holy Places, the Note goes on to declare that 'in conse-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 156.

CHAP. XI.

'quence of the hostile tendencies manifested for some 'years past in whatever related to Russia, she required 'in behalf of the religious communities of the Orthodox 'Church an explanatory and positive act of guarantee.' Then the Note requested that the Ottoman Cabinet would 'be pleased in its wisdom to weigh the serious 'nature of the offence which it had committed, and 'compare it with the moderation of the demands 'made for reparation and guarantee, which a consider-'ation of legitimate defence might have put forward 'at greater length and in more peremptory terms.' Finally the Note stated that 'the reply of the Minister 'for Foreign Affairs would indicate to the Ambassador 'the ulterior duties which he would have to discharge;' and intimated that those duties would be 'consistent 'with the dignity of the Government which he repre-'sented, and of the religion professed by his Sovereign.'*

It might have been politic for Prince Mentschikoff to send such a Note as this in the midst of the panic which followed his landing in the early days of March, but it was vain to send it now. The Turks had returned to their old allegiance. They could take their rest, for they knew that Lord Stratford watched. Him they feared, him they trusted, him they obeyed. It was in vain now that the Prince sought to crush the will of the Sultan and of his Ministers. Whether he threatened, or whether he tried to cajole; whether he sent his dragoman with angry messages to the Porte, or whether he went thither in person; whether he urged the members of

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 158.

the Government in private interviews, or whether he obtained audience of the Sultan, he always encountered the same firmness, the same courteous deference, and, above all, that same terrible moderation which, day by day and hour by hour, was putting him more and more in the wrong. The voice which spoke to him might be the voice of the Grand Vizier, or the voice of the Reis Effendi, or the voice of the Sultan himself; but the mind which he was really encountering was always the mind of one man.

Far from quailing under the threatening tone of the Note, the Turkish Government now determined to enter into no convention with Russia, and to reject Prince Mentschikoff's proposals respecting the protection of the Greek Church in Turkey. The Grand Vizier and the Reis Effendi calmly consulted Lord Stratford as to the manner in which they should give effect to the decision of the Cabinet, and Lord Stratford, now placed at ease by the settlement of the question of the Holy Places, contentedly prepared to encounter the next expected moves of Prince Mentschikoff.*

Rage of the Czar on finding himself encountered by Lord Stratford.

In strife for ascendancy like that which was now going on between the Czar and Lord Stratford, the pain of undergoing defeat is of such a kind that the pangs of the sufferer accumulate; and far from being assuaged by time, they are every day less easy to bear than they were the day before. By the pomp and the declared significance of Prince Mentschi-

* 24th April. Ibid. p. 160. The settlement of the question of the Holy Places was on the 22d.

CHAP. XI.

koff's mission, the Emperor Nicholas had drawn upon himself the eyes of Europe, and the presence of the religious ingredient had brought him under the gaze of many millions of his own subjects who were not commonly observers of the business of the State. And he who, in transactions thus watched by men, was preparing for him cruel discomfiture—he who kept him on the rack, and regulated his torments with cold unrelenting precision—was the old familiar enemy whom he had once refused to receive as the English Ambassador at St Petersburg. People who knew the springs of action in the Russian capital used to say at that time that the whole 'Eastern Question,' as it was called, lay enclosed in one name—lay enclosed in the name of Lord Stratford. They acknowledged that the Emperor Nicholas could not bear the stress of our Ambassador's authority with the Porte.

And, in truth, the Czar's power of endurance was drawing to a close. He wavered and wavered again and again. He was versed in business of state, and it would seem that when his mind was turned to things temporal he truly meant to be politic and just. But in his more religious moments he was furious. Even for Nicholas the Czar it was all but impossible to endure the Ambassador's political ascendancy; but the bare thought of Lord Stratford's protecting Christianity in Turkey was more than could be borne by Nicholas the Pontiff. Men not jesting approached him with stories that the Ambassador had determined to bring over the Sultan to the Church of England.

His brain was not strong enough to be safe against rumours like that. He almost came to feel that the Englishman, who seemed to be endued with strange powers of compulsion always used for the support of Moslem dominion and for curbing the orthodox Russo-Greek Church, was a being in his nature Satanic, and that resistance to him was as much a duty (and was a duty as thickly beset with practical difficulties) as resistance to the great enemy of mankind. Maddened at last by this singular kind of torment, the Czar broke loose from the restraints of policy, and was even so void of counsel that, having determined to do violence to the Sultan, he did not take the common care of giving to his action any semblance of consistency with public law.

Its effect upon the negotiation.

The despatches framed under the orders of a monarch in this condition of mind reached Prince Mentschikoff in the beginning of May. Breathing fresh anger and enjoining haste, they fiercely drove him on. They urged him to an almost instantaneous rupture, without giving him a standing-ground for his quarrel. Yet at this time the condition of things was of such a kind that a good cause, nay even a specious grievance, would have helped Prince Mentschikoff better than the advance of the 4th and 5th corps, or the patrolling of Dannenburg's cavalry.

Mentschikoff's difficulty.

In truth, what now befell the Russian Ambassador was this:—He found himself placed under the compulsion of violent instructions at a time when all ground for just resentment was wanting. He could obey his orders, and force on a rupture; but he could

CHAP. XI.

no longer do this upon grounds which Europe would regard as having a semblance of fairness. When he had despatched his Note of the 19th of April, the question of the Holy Places was still unsettled, and he was then able to blend that grievance with other matters, and make it serve as a basis for his ulterior demands; but now that that question was disposed of his standing-ground failed him, for he alleged against the Sultan no infraction of a treaty, and the only grievance of which he had had to complain had been redressed on the 22d of April; and yet, passing straight from this smooth condition of things, he had to call upon the Sultan to sign a treaty which he disapproved, and to make his refusal to do so a ground for the immediate rupture of diplomatic relations.

He is baffled by Lord Stratford.

The natural hope of a diplomatist placed in a stress of this sort would have lain in the chance that the Government upon which he was pressing might be guilty of some imprudence, and it may be inferred that the Note of the 19th had been framed with a view of provoking the Turkish Ministers into a burst of anger. But every hope of this kind had been baffled. Turks were fanatical, Turks were fierce, Turks were quick to avenge, and, above all, Turks were liable to panic; but some spell had come upon the race. The spell had come upon the Sultan, it had come upon the Turkish Ministers, it had come upon the Great Council, it had come even upon the larger mass of the warlike people who bring their feelings to bear upon the policy of their Sultan. At every step of his negotiation Prince Mentschi-

koff encountered an adversary always courteous, always moderate, but cold, steadfast, wary, and seeming as though he looked to the day when perhaps he might wreak cruel vengeance. Who this was the Prince now knew; and he perhaps began to understand the nature of the torment inflicted upon his imperial Master by the bare utterance of the one hated name. Prince Mentschikoff found himself powerless as a negotiator, and it was clear that, unless he could descend to the rude expedient of an ultimatum or a threat, he was a man annulled. Indeed, without some act of violence he could hardly deliver himself from ridicule.

He presses his demand in a new form.

Therefore, on the 5th of May, Prince Mentschikoff forwarded to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the draft of a Sened or Convention, purporting to be made between the Sultan and the Emperor of Russia. This proposed Sened confirmed, with the force of a treaty engagement, the arrangements respecting the Holy Places which had been made in favour of the Greek Church, and it also introduced and applied to the rival Churches a provision similar in its wording to that which often appears in commercial treaties, and goes by the name of 'the 'most favoured nation clause.' But the noxious feature of the Convention was detected in the Article which purported to secure for ever to the Orthodox Church and its Clergy all the rights and immunities which they had already enjoyed, and those of which they were possessed from ancient times.*

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 167.

CHAP. XI.

Here, under a new form, was the old endeavour to obtain for Russia a protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey.

This draft of a Convention was annexed to a Note, in which Prince Mentschikoff pressed its immediate adoption, and urged the Sublime Porte, 'laying 'aside all hesitation and all mistrust, by which,' he declared, 'the dignity and the generous sentiments of 'his august Master would be aggrieved,'* to delay its decision no longer. In conclusion, Prince Mentschikoff suffered himself to request that the Minister for Foreign Affairs would be good enough to let him have his answer by the following Tuesday, and to add that he could not 'consider any longer delay in 'any other light than as a want of respect towards 'his Government, which would impose upon him the 'most painful duty.'*

Counsels of Lord Stratford.

Upon receiving this hostile communication, the Minister for Foreign Affairs appealed to Lord Stratford for counsel. He advised the Turkish Government to be still deferential, still courteous, still willing to go to the very edge of what might be safely conceded, but to stand firm.

His communications with Prince Mentschikoff.

At this time Lord Stratford received a visit from Prince Mentschikoff, and ascertained from him that he did not mean to recede from his demands. The Prince declared that he had run out the whole line of his moderation, and could go no further, and that his Government would no longer submit to the state of inferiority in which he said Russia was held

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 165.

with reference to the co-religionists of the Emperor Nicholas. CHAP. XI.

A few days later Lord Stratford addressed a letter to Prince Mentschikoff, in which, with all the diplomatic courtesy of which he was master, he strove to convey to the Prince some idea of the way in which he was derogating from that justice and moderation towards foreign sovereigns which had hitherto marked the reign of the Emperor Nicholas. The answer of Prince Mentschikoff announced that it was impossible for him to agree in the views pressed upon him by Lord Stratford, and (after a little more of the wasteful verbiage in which Russia used to assert that her exaction was good and wholesome for Turkey) the Prince claimed a right to freedom of action. He said that he was not conscious of having failed in the loyal assurances given by his Government to the Cabinet of the Queen, declared that he had been perfectly sincere in his communications with Lord Stratford, and owned that he had expected a frank co-operation on his part. But when he had written these common things the truth broke out. 'The 'Emperor's legation,' said he, 'cannot stay at Con- 'stantinople, under the circumstances in which it has 'been placed. It cannot submit to the secondary 'position to which it might be wished to reduce it.'*

Lord Stratford, it would seem, had now little hope of being able to bring about an accommodation, and henceforth his great object was to take care that the Porte should stand firm, but should so act that,

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 217.

CHAP. XI.

in the opinion of England and of Europe, the Sultan should seem justified in exposing himself to the hazard of a rupture with Russia.

His advice to the Turkish Ministers.

Late at night Lord Stratford saw the Grand Vizier at his country-house, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Seraskier were present. During the day there had been a little failing of heart, and when the Turkish Ministers were in the presence of M. de la Cour, they had seemed 'disposed to shrink from encountering the conse-'quences of Prince Mentschikoff's retiring in dis-'pleasure;'* but either they had dissembled their fears in the presence of the English Ambassador, or else, whilst Lord Stratford was in the same room with them, their fear of other Powers was suspended. They were unanimous in regarding the Convention as inadmissible. Lord Stratford's determination was that the demand of Prince Mentschikoff should be resisted; but that at the same time there should be shown so much of courtesy and of forbearance, and so great a willingness to go to the utmost limit of safe concession, and to improve the condition of the Christian subjects of the Porte, that the Turks should appear before Europe in a character almost angelic. 'I advised them,' said he, 'to open a door 'for negotiation in the Note to be prepared, and to 'withhold no concession compatible with the real 'welfare and independence of the Empire. I could 'not in conscience urge them to accept the Russian 'demands as now presented to them, but I reminded

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 177.

'them of the guarantee required by Prince Mentschi-
'koff, and strongly recommended that, if the guaran-
'tee he required was inadmissible, a substitute for it
'should be found in a frank and comprehensive exer-
'cise of the Sultan's authority in the promulgation of
'a firman, securing both the spiritual and temporal
'privileges of all the Porte's tributary subjects, and,
'by way of further security, communicated officially
'to the five great Powers of Christendom.'* To all these counsels the Turkish Ministers listened with assenting mind.

But it was now late in the night, and the Ambassador rose. Perhaps the hour and the Ambassador's movement to depart cast a shadow of anxiety upon the minds of the Turkish Ministers. Perhaps the ripple of the waters (for the conference was in a house on the edge of the Bosphorus) called to mind the thought of the English flag. At all events, the Grand Vizier, in that moment of weakness, suffered himself to cast a thought after the arm of the flesh, and to ask whether the Porte might expect the eventual approach of the English squadron in the Mediterranean. Lord Stratford rebuked him. 'I
'replied,' said he, 'that I considered the position in
'its present stage to be one of a moral character, and
'consequently that its difficulties or hazards, what-
'ever they might be, should be rather met by acts of
'a similar description than by demonstrations calcu-
'lated to increase alarm and provoke resentment.'
It was a new and a strange task for this Grand

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 177.

CHAP. XI.

Vizier of a warlike Tartar nation to be called upon to defend a threatened empire by 'acts of a moral 'character;' but after all his reliance was upon the man. It might be hard for him to understand how the mere advantage of being in the right could be used against the Sebastopol fleet, or the army that was hovering upon the Pruth; but if he looked upon the close, angry, resolute lips of the Ambassador, and the grand overhanging of his brow, he saw that which more than all else in the world takes hold of the Oriental mind, for he saw strength held in reserve. And this faith was of such a kind that, far from being weakened, it would gather new force from Lord Stratford's refusal to speak of material help. The Turkish Ministry determined to reject Prince Mentschikoff's proposals, and to do this in the way advised by the English Ambassador. All this while Lord Stratford was unconscious of exercising any ascendancy over his fellow-creatures, and it seemed to him that the Turks were determining this momentous question by means of their unbiassed judgments.*

Prince Mentschikoff was soon made aware of the refusal with which his demand was to be met, and, finding that all his communications with the Turkish Ministers gave him nothing but the faithful echo of the counsels addressed to them by Lord Stratford, he seems to have imagined the plan of overstepping the Turkish Ministers, and endeavouring to wring an assent to his demands from the Sultan himself. It seems probable that Lord Stratford had been apprised

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 213.

CHAP. XI.

of this intention, and was willing to defeat it, for on the 9th he sought a private audience of the Sultan: he sought it, of course through the legitimate channel. The Minister for Foreign Affairs went with Lord Stratford to the Sultan's apartment, and then withdrew. The Ambassador spoke gravely to the Sultan of the danger with which his Empire was threatened, and then of the grounds for confidence. He was happy, he said, to find that His Majesty's servants, both Ministers and Council, were not less inclined to gratify the Russian Ambassador with all that could be safely conceded to him, than determined to withhold their consent from every requisition calculated to inflict a serious injury on the independence and dignity of their Sovereign. 'I had 'waited,' said Lord Stratford, 'to know their own 'unbiassed impressions respecting the kind of gua- 'rantee demanded by Prince Mentschikoff, and I 'could not do otherwise than approve the decision 'which they appeared to have adopted with unanimity. 'My own impression is, that if your Majesty should 'sanction that decision, the Ambassador will probably 'break off his relations with the Porte and go away, 'together perhaps with his whole embassy: nor is it 'quite impossible even that a temporary occupation, 'however unjust, of the Danubian Principalities by 'Russia may take place; but I feel certain that neither 'a declaration of war, nor any other act of open hos- 'tility, is to be apprehended for the present, as the 'Emperor Nicholas cannot resort to such extremities 'on account of the pending differences without con-

His audience of the Sultan.

CHAP. XI.

'tradicting his most solemn assurances, and exposing 'himself to the indignant censure of all Europe. I 'conceive that, under such circumstances, the true po- 'sition to be maintained by the Porte is one of moral 'resistance to such demands as are really inadmis- 'sible on just and essential grounds, and that the 'principle should even be applied under protest to 'the occupation of the Principalities, not in weakness 'or despair, but in reliance on a good cause, and on 'the sympathy of friendly and independent Govern- 'ments. A firm adherence to this line of conduct as 'long as it is possible to maintain it with honour 'will, in my judgment, offer the best chances of ulti- 'mate success with the least practicable degree of 'provocation, and prevent disturbance of commercial 'interests. This language,' writes Lord Stratford, 'appeared to interest the Sultan deeply, and also 'to coincide with His Majesty's existing opinions. 'He said that he was well aware of the dangers to 'which I had alluded; that he was perfectly pre- 'pared, in the exercise of his own free will, to con- 'firm and to render effective the protection pro- 'mised to all classes of his tributary subjects in 'matters of religious worship, including the immu- 'nities and privileges granted to their respective 'clergy. He showed me the last communications in 'writing which had passed between his Ministers and 'the Russian Embassy; he thanked me for having 'helped to bring the question of the Holy Places to 'an arrangement; he professed his reliance on the 'friendly support of Great Britain.'

CHAP. XI.

But now Lord Stratford apprised the Sultan that he had a communication to make to him which he had hitherto withheld from his Ministers, reserving it for the private ear of his Majesty. The pale Sultan listened.

The disclosure which he had reserved for the Sultan's ear.

Then the Ambassador announced that, in the event of imminent danger, he was instructed to request the Commander of Her Majesty's forces in the Mediterranean to hold his squadron in readiness.*

This order was of itself a slight thing, and it conferred but a narrow and stinted authority; but, imparted to the Sultan in private audience by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, it came with more weight than the promise of armed support from the lips of a common Statesman. Long withheld from the Turkish Ministers, and now disclosed to them through their Sovereign, it confirmed them in the faith that whatever a man might know of the great Eltchi's power, there was always more to be known. And when a man once comes to be thus thought of by Orientals, he is more their master than one who seeks to overpower their minds by making coarse pretences of strength.

Turkish answer to Mentschikoff's demand.

On the 10th the Secretary for Foreign Affairs sent his answer to Prince Mentschikoff's demand. The letter was full of courtesy and deference towards Russia: it declared it to be the firm intention of the Porte to maintain unimpaired the rights of all the tributary subjects of the Empire, and it expressed a willingness to negotiate with Russia concerning a

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 213.

CHAP. XI.

church and an hospital at Jerusalem, and also as to the privileges which should be conceded to Russian subjects, monks and pilgrims; but the Note objected to entertain that portion of the Russian demands which went to give Russia a protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey.*

Mentschikoff's angry reply.

On the following day Prince Mentschikoff sent an angry reply to this Note, declining to accept it as an answer to his demand. He stated that he was instructed to negotiate for an engagement guaranteeing the privileges of the Greek Church as a mark of respect to the religious convictions of the Emperor; and if the principles which formed the basis of this proposed mark of respect were to be rejected, and if the Porte, by a systematic opposition, was to persist in closing the very approaches to an intimate and direct understanding, then the Prince declared with pain that he must consider his mission at an end, must break off relations with the Cabinet of the Sultan, and throw upon the responsibility of his Ministers all the consequences which might ensue. The Prince ended his Note by requiring that it should be answered within three days.†

His private audience of the Sultan.

On the second day after sending this Note, Prince Mentschikoff was to have an interview with the Grand Vizier at half-past one o'clock; but before that hour came the Prince took a step which had the effect of breaking up the Ministry. Without the concurrence, and apparently without the previous know-

* May 10. 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 196. † May 11. Ibid. p. 197.

ledge, of the Ministers, he found means to obtain a private audience of the Sultan at ten o'clock in the morning. The Sultan did wrongly when he submitted to receive a foreign Ambassador without the advice or knowledge of his Ministers, and the Grand Vizier had the spirit to resent the course thus taken by his Sovereign; for upon being sent for by the Sultan immediately after the audience, he requested permission to stay at home, and at the same time gave up his seals of office. The new Ministry, however, was formed of men who, as members of the Great Council, had declared opinions adverse to the extreme demands of Russia.* Reshid Pasha became the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and this was not an appointment which disclosed any intention on the part of the Sultan to disengage himself from the counsels of the English Ambassador.

This causes a change of Ministry at Constantinople;

If the Sultan had erred in granting an audience without the assent of his Ministers, he had carried his weakness no further. It soon transpired that Prince Mentschikoff had failed to wring from the Sultan any dangerous words. It seems that when the Prince came to press his demands upon the imperial ear, he found the monarch reposing in the calmness of mind which had been given him by the English Ambassador five days before, and in a few moments he had the mortification of hearing that for all answer to his demands he was referred to the Ministers of State.† In the judgment of Prince Mentschikoff, to

but fails to shake the Sultan.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 194. † Ibid. p. 195.

CHAP. XI.

be thus answered was to be remitted back to Lord Stratford. It was hard to bear.

Mentschikoff violently presses his demands.

Prince Mentschikoff began his intercourse with the new Foreign Secretary by insisting upon an immediate reply to his Note of the 11th of May. Reshid Pasha asked for the delay of a few days, on the ground of the change of Ministry. This reasonable demand was met at first by a refusal, but afterwards by a Note which seems to have been rendered incoherent by the difficulty in which Prince Mentschikoff was placed; for, on the one hand, a request for a delay of a few days, founded upon a change of Ministry, was a request too fair to be refused with decency; and, on the other hand, the violent orders which had just come in from St Petersburg enjoined the Prince to close the unequal strife with Lord Stratford, and to enforce instant compliance, or at once break off and depart. The Note began by announcing that Reshid Pasha's communication imposed upon the Russian Ambassador the duty of breaking off from the then present time his official relations with the Sublime Porte; but it added that the Ambassador would suspend the last demand, which was to determine the attitude which Russia would thenceforth assume towards Turkey. The Note further declared that a continuance of hesitation on the part of the Ottoman Government would be regarded as an indication of reserve and distrust offensive to the Russian Government, and that the departure of the Russian Ambassador, and also of the Imperial Legation, would be the inevitable and immediate consequence.

CHAP. XI.

By the voices of forty-two against three, the Great Council of the Porte determined to adhere to the decision already taken; and on the 18th, Reshid Pasha called upon Prince Mentschikoff, and orally imparted to him the extreme length to which the Turkish Government was willing to go in the way of concession. The honour of the Porte required, he said, that the exclusively spiritual privileges granted under the Sultan's predecessors, and confirmed by His Majesty, should remain in full force; and he declared that the equitable system pursued by the Porte towards its subjects demanded that the Greek Clergy should be on as good a footing as other Christian subjects of the Sultan. He added that a firman was to issue proclaiming this determination on the part of the Sultan. In regard to the shrine at Jerusalem, Reshid Pasha was willing to engage that there should be no change without communicating with the Russian and French Governments. Reshid Pasha also consented that a church and hospital for the Russians should be built at Jerusalem; and in regard to all these last matters connected with the Holy Land, the Porte, he said, was willing to solemnise its promise by a formal convention. These overtures were made in exact accordance with a Paper of advice which Lord Stratford had placed in the hands of Reshid Pasha five days before.* Virtually Reshid Pasha offered Prince Mentschikoff everything which Russia had demanded, except the

The Great Council determine to resist.

Offers made by the Porte under the advice of Lord Stratford.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 196.

CHAP. XI.

protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey,*—that he refused.

Instantly, and without waiting for the written statement of the proposals orally conveyed to him by Reshid Pasha, Prince Mentschikoff determined to break off the negotiation. On the same day he addressed to the Porte an official Note, which purported to be truly his last. In this he declared that by rejecting with distrust the wishes of the Emperor in favour of the orthodox Greco-Russian religion, the Sublime Porte had failed in what was due to an august and ancient ally. The refusal, he said, was a fresh injury. He declared his mission at an end; and after asserting that the Imperial Court could not, without prejudice to its dignity and without exposing itself to fresh insults, continue to maintain a mission at Constantinople, he announced that he should not only quit Constantinople himself, but should take with him the whole Staff of the Imperial Legation, except the Director of the Commercial Department. The Prince added, that the refusal of a guarantee for the orthodox Greco-Russian religion obliged the Imperial Government to seek in its own power that security which the Porte declined to give by way of treaty engagement; and he added that any infringement of the existing state of the Eastern Church would be regarded as an act of hostility to Russia.†

Mentschikoff replies by declaring his mission at an end.

Prince Mentschikoff's departure did not immediately follow the despatch of this Note, and on the

The representatives of the four Powers

* 'Eastern Papers,' p. 205, and see p. 252. † 18th May. Ibid. p. 206.

morning of the 19th Lord Stratford took a step of great moment to the tranquillity of Europe, for it laid the seed of a wholesome policy; which, until it was ruined, as will be seen hereafter, by the evil designs of some, and by the weakness of other men, promised fair to enforce justice and to maintain truth without bringing upon the world the calamity of a war. Instead of putting himself in communication with one only of the other great Powers, and so preparing a road to hostilities, the English Ambassador assembled the representatives of Austria, France, and Prussia. It then appeared that there was no essential difference of opinion between the representatives of the four great Powers. None of them questioned the soundness of the Porte's views in resisting the extreme demands of Russia; all acknowledged the spirit of conciliation displayed by the Sultan's Ministers; all were agreed in desiring to prevent the rupture; all desired that the Emperor Nicholas should be enabled to recede without discredit from the wrong path which he had taken, and were willing to cover his retreat by every device which was consistent with the honour and welfare of other States. This union of opinion, followed close by concerted action, was surely a right example of the way in which it was becoming for Europe to regard an approach to injustice by one of the great Powers. It was arranged that the Austrian Envoy should call upon Prince Mentschikoff, should apprise him of the sorrow with which the representatives of the four Powers contemplated the rupture of his relations

assembled by Lord Stratford.

Policy involved in this step.

Unanimity of the four representatives.

Their measures.

CHAP. XI.

with the Porte; should express the lively gratification which a friendly solution, if that were still possible, would afford them; and, finally, should ascertain whether the Prince would receive through a private channel the Porte's intended Note, and give it a calm consideration.* This appeal from the representatives of the four great Powers produced no effect on the mind of Prince Mentschikoff,† and Lord Stratford scarcely expected that it would do so; but it commenced, or rather it marked and strengthened, that expression of grave disapproval on the part of the four Powers, which was the true and the safe corrective of an outrage threatened by one.

After his official relations with the Porte had come to a close, Prince Mentschikoff received and rejected the Turkish Note,‡ which embodied the concessions already described to him orally by Reshid Pasha; but on the evening of the 20th of May the Prince determined to make a concession in point of form, and to be content to have the engagement which he was demanding from the Porte in the form of a diplomatic Note, instead of a Treaty or Convention.

Russia's ultimatum.

In furtherance of this view, though his official capacity had ceased, he caused to be delivered to Reshid Pasha the draft of a Note to be given by the Porte. This draft purported to involve the Porte in engagements exactly the same as those which it had refused to contract, and to give to Russia (by means of a

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 205. † Ibid. p. 219.

‡ This Note, being the last offer made by the Turkish Government to Prince Mentschikoff, is printed in the Appendix.

Note instead of a Convention) the protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey.* Reshid Pasha immediately sent the Note to Lord Stratford for communication to the three other representatives of the four Powers, with a request that they would give an opinion as to the most advisable mode of proceeding. Early the next morning, Lord Stratford ascertained that, in the opinion of Reshid Pasha, the altered form of the Russian demands left them as objectionable as ever.† The Russians imagined that Reshid Pasha was willing to give way to them, and that he even entreated Lord Stratford to let him yield, but that the English Ambassador was inexorable. There was no truth in this notion.‡ Lord Stratford's counsels had cut so deep into the mind of the Turkish Minister that he was well able to follow them without wanting guidance from hour to hour. The English Ambassador assembled the representatives of the three Powers, and found that they unanimously agreed with him 'in adopting an opinion essentially 'identical with that of the Turkish Ministers.'§ They all signed a memorandum declaring that, 'upon a question which so closely touched the free-'dom of action and the sovereignty of His Majesty 'the Sultan, his Highness Reshid Pasha was the best 'judge of the course which it was fitting to take, and 'that they did not consider themselves authorised to 'pronounce an opinion.'‖

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 220. As this Draft was Prince Mentschikoff's real ultimatum, it is printed in the Appendix.

† Ibid. pp. 219, 220. ‡ It is clearly disproved. Ibid. pp. 336-8.

§ Ibid. p. 220. ‖ Ibid. p. 222.

CHAP. XI.

Its rejection.

Prince Mentschikoff had caused it to be understood that this his last demand was only to be accepted by being accepted in full. It was rejected; and on the 21st of May the Prince was preparing to depart, when he heard that the Porte intended to issue and proclaim a guarantee for the exercise of the spiritual rights possessed by the Greek Church in Turkey. It was hard for Russia to endure the resistance which she had encountered, but it was more difficult still to hear, with any semblance of calmness, that the Porte, of its own free will, was doing a main part of that which the Emperor Nicholas had urged it to do. This was not tolerable. To Russian ears the least utterance about 'the free will of the Porte' instantly conveyed the idea that all was to be ordered and governed at the will and pleasure of the English Ambassador. The thought that the protectorate of the Greek Church was not only refused to the Czar, but was now passing quietly into the hands of Lord Stratford, was so maddening, that Prince Mentschikoff, forgetting or transcending the fact that he had formally announced the rupture of his relations with the Porte, now suffered himself to address a solemn Note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which (basing himself upon a theory that the mention of the spiritual might be deemed to derogate from the temporal rights of the Church) he announced that any act having the effect which this theory attributed to the proposed guarantee, would be regarded as 'hostile to Russia and her religion.'* Having de-

Final threats of Prince Mentschikoff.

His departure.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 253.

spatched these last words of threat, he at length went on board and departed. On the same day the arms of Russia were taken down from the palace of the Imperial Embassy.

Effect of the mission upon the credit of Nicholas.

Thus ended the ill-omened mission of Prince Mentschikoff. It had lasted eleven weeks. In that compass of time the Emperor Nicholas destroyed the whole repute which he had earned by wielding the power of Russia, for more than a quarter of a century, with justice and moderation towards foreign States.* But, moreover, in these same fatal days the Emperor Nicholas did much to bring his good faith into question. The tenor of his previous life makes it right to insist that any imputation upon his personal honour shall be tested with scrupulous care; but it is hard to escape the conviction that, during several weeks in the spring of the year, he was giving to the English Government a series of assurances which misrepresented the instructions given by him to Prince Mentschikoff during that same period. Thus, almost at the very hour when Count Nesselrode was assuring Sir Hamilton Seymour that 'the adjustment of the difficulties respecting the Holy Places 'would settle all matters in dispute between Russia 'and the Porte,' † Prince Mentschikoff was striving to wring from the Porte a secret treaty, depriving the Sultan of his control over the Patriarchate of Con-

* Computed from the Peace of Adrianople in 1829. The reign of Nicholas commenced in 1825.

† Ibid. p. 102. The slight qualification with which Count Nesselrode accompanied the assurance, tended to strengthen it by giving it greater precision.

CHAP. XI.

stantinople, and ceding to Russia a virtual protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey, and was enjoining the Turkish Ministers to keep this negotiation concealed from the 'ill-disposed Powers,' for so he called England and France;* and again, in the very week in which the Czar was joining with the English Government in a form more than usually solemn in denouncing the practice of 'harassing the 'Porte by overbearing demands, put forward in a 'manner humiliating to its independence and its 'dignity,'† he was shaping the angry despatch which caused Prince Mentschikoff to insult the Porte by his peremptory Note of the 5th of May.

But notwithstanding all this variance between what the Czar said and what he did, it must be acknowledged that it would be hard to explain his words and his course of action by imputing to him a vulgar and rational duplicity; for it was plain that the secrecy at which he aimed would be terminated by the success of the negotiation; and supposing him to have been in possession of his reason, and to have been acting on grounds temporal, he could not have imagined that, for the sake of extorting a new promise from the Sultan, and giving a little more semblance of legality to pretensions which he already maintained to be valid, it was politic for him to forfeit that reputation for honour, which was a main element of his greatness and his strength. The

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 108.

† Memorandum by the Emperor Nicholas confidentially delivered to Sir Hamilton Seymour, and dated the 15th April 1853. 'Eastern Papers,' part v. p. 25.

dreams of territorial aggrandisement which he imparted to Sir Hamilton Seymour in January and February had all dissolved before the middle of March, and it is vain to say that after that time his actions were governed by any rational plan of conquest. Policy required that for encroachments against Turkey he should choose a time when Europe, engaged in some other strife, might be likely to acquiesce; far from doing this, the Czar chose a time when the four Powers had nothing else to do than to watch and restrain the aggression of Russia. Again, policy required that pressure upon the Sultan of a hostile kind should be justified by narratives of the cruel treatment of the Christians by their Turkish masters; yet if any such causes existed for the anger of Christendom, the Emperor Nicholas never took the pains to make them known to Europe. From first to last his loose charges against the Turks for maltreatment of their Christian subjects were not only left without proof, but were even unsupported by anything like statements of fact.

Still, the Czar was not labouring under any general derangement of mind. The truth seems to be that zeal for his Church had made greater inroads upon his moral and intellectual nature than was commonly known, and that when he was under the stress of religious or rather of ecclesiastical feelings he ceased to be politic, and even perhaps ceased to be honest. It was at such times that there came upon him that tendency to act in a spirit of barbaric cunning which was really inconsistent with the general

CHAP. XI.

tenor of his life. But if it happened that whilst his mind was already under one of these spiritual visitations, it was further inflamed by any tidings which roused his old antagonism to Sir Stratford Canning, then instantly it was wrought into such a state that one must be content to mark its fitful and violent impact upon human affairs without undertaking to deduce the result from any symmetrical scheme of action.

But, whatever the cause, the fall was great. The polity of the Russian State was of such a kind that, when the character of its monarch stood high he exalted the empire, and when he descended he drew the empire along with him. In the beginning of March the Emperor Nicholas almost oppressed the continent of Europe with the weight of his vast power, conjoined with moderation and a spirit of austere justice towards foreign States. Before the end of May he stood before the world shorn bare of all this moral strength, and having nothing left to him except what might be reckoned and set down upon paper by an inspector of troops or a surveyor of ships. In less than three months the station of Russia amongst the Powers of Europe underwent a great change.

Position in which Lord Stratford's skill had placed the Porte.

The English Ambassador remained upon the field of the conflict. Between the time of his return to Constantinople and the departure of Prince Mentschikoff there had passed forty-five days. In this period Lord Stratford had brought to a settlement the question of the Holy Places, had baffled all the efforts of

the Emperor Nicholas to work an inroad upon the sovereign rights of the Sultan, and had enforced upon the Turks a firmness so indomitable, and a moderation so unwearied, that from the hour of his arrival at Constantinople they resisted every claim which was fraught with real danger—but always resisted with courtesy—and yielded to every demand, however unjust in principle, if it seemed that they could yield with honour and with safety. Knowing that, if he left room for doubt whether Russia or the Porte were in the right, the controversy would run a danger of being decided in favour of the stronger, he provided, with a keen foresight, and at the cost of having to put a hard restraint upon his anger, and even upon his sense of justice, that the concessions offered by the Turks should reach beyond their just liability; nay, should reach so far beyond it as to leave a broad margin between, and make it difficult even for any one who inclined towards the strong to deny that Russia was committing an outrage upon a weaker State, and was therefore offending against Europe. In truth, he placed the Moslem before the world in an attitude of Christian forbearance sustained by unfailing courage; and in proportion as men loved justice and were led by the gentle precepts of the Gospel, they inclined to the Mahometan Prince, who seemed to represent their principles, and began to think how best they could help him to make a stand against the ferocious Christianity of the Czar. In England especially this sentiment was kindled, and already it was beginning

CHAP. XI.

to gain a hold over the policy of the State. Less than three months before, the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire had been thought a fair subject to bring into question, and now the firmness and the strange moderation with which the Turks stood resisting the demands of their oppressor, was drawing the English people, day by day, into a steadfast alliance with the Sultan.

But if Lord Stratford had succeeded in gaining over to his cause the general opinion of Europe, or rather in adapting the policy of the Divan to what he knew would be approved by the people of the West, he did not neglect to use such means as he had for moving the Governments of the four Powers; and the concerted action to which he had succeeded in bringing them on the 21st of May was a beginning of the peaceful coercion with which it was fitting that Europe should withstand the encroachments of a wrong-doer. But this was not all that was effected by the diplomatic transactions of the spring. It cannot be concealed that, without the solemnity of a treaty—nay, without the knowledge of Parliament, and perhaps without the knowledge of her Prime Minister—England, in the course of a few weeks, had slided into all the responsibility of a defensive alliance with the Sultan against the Emperor of Russia. It may seem strange that this could be; but the truth is, that the general scope of a lengthened official correspondence is not to be gathered by merely learning at intervals the import of each despatch. Taken singly, almost every despatch com-

Engagements contracted by England.

posed by a skilled diplomatist will be likely to seem wise and moderate, and deserving of a complete approval; but if a Statesman goes on approving and approving one by one a long series of papers of this sort without rousing himself to the effort of taking a broader view of the transactions which he has separately examined, he may find himself entangled in a course of action which he never intended to adopt. Perhaps this view tends to explain the reasons which caused a Minister whose love of peace was passionate and almost fanatical to become gradually and imperceptibly responsible for a policy leading towards war. Lord Aberdeen did not formally renounce his neutral policy of 1828, and he did not at this time advise the Queen to conclude any treaty for the defence of Turkey, nor ask the judgment of Parliament upon the expediency of taking such a course; but day after day, and week after week, the cabinet-boxes came and went, and came and went again, and every day he passed his anxious and inevitable hour and a half at the Foreign Office; and at length it became apparent that the Government of which he was the chief had so acted that it could not with honour* recede from the duty of defending the home provinces of the Sultan against an unprovoked attack by Russia. The advice of a strong Power is highly valued, but it is valued for reasons which should make men chary of giving it. It is not commonly valued for the sake of its mere wisdom, but partly because it

Obligations contracted by the act of giving advice.

* So said by Lord Clarendon. 'Eastern Papers,' part i.

CHAP. XI.

is more or less a disclosure of policy, and still more because it tends to draw the advising State into a line of action corresponding with its counsels. England, by the voice of her Ambassador (approved from time to time by the Home Government*), had been advising a weak Power to resist a strong one. Counsels of such a kind could not but have a grave import.

The French Emperor had been more careful to keep himself free from engagements with the Porte; but he had long ago resolved to seize the coming occasion of acting in concert with England. And England now became bound. Within three days from Prince Mentschikoff's departure, France and England were beginning to concert resistance to Russia;† on the 26th of May the Sultan's refusal of the Russian ultimatum was warmly applauded by the English Government, and before the end of the month the Foreign Secretary instructed the English Ambassador that it was 'indispensable to 'take measures for the protection of the Sultan, 'and to aid His Highness in repelling any attack 'that might be made upon his territory;' and that 'the use of force was to be resorted to as a last and 'unavoidable resource for the protection of Turkey 'against an unprovoked attack, and in defence of her 'independence, which England,' as Lord Clarendon declared, 'was bound to maintain.'‡

England, in concert with France, becomes engaged to defend the Sultan's dominions.

Lord Clarendon at the same time addressed a de-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 183. † 24th May. Ibid. p. 182.
‡ Ibid. p. 197.

spatch to St Petersburg, setting forth with painful clearness the difference between the words and the acts of the Czar, and indignantly requiring to know what was the object which Russia had 'in view, and 'in what manner, and to what extent, the dominions 'of the Sultan and the tranquillity of Europe were 'threatened.'*

The process by which England became bound.

It was not by any one decisive act or promise, but by the tenor of expressions scattered through a long series of Despatches, and by words used from time to time in conversations, that England had taken upon herself the burthen of defending the Sultan against the Czar. Parliament was sitting when this momentous engagement was being contracted, and it may be thought that there was room for questioning whether England in concert with France alone, and without first doing her utmost to obtain the concurrence of the other Powers, should good-humouredly take upon herself a duty which was rather European than English, and which tended to involve her in war. There were eloquent members of the Legislature who would have been willing to deprecate such a policy, and to moderate and confine its action; but apparently they did not understand how England was becoming entangled until about nine months afterwards, and, either from want of knowledge or want of promptitude, they lost the occasion for aiding the Crown with their counsels. Indeed, from first to last, the backwardness of the English Parliament in seizing upon the changeful phases of the diplomatic strife was

Slowness of the English Parliament.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 200.

CHAP. XI.

one of the main causes of the impending evil, and this was only one of the occasions in which it failed in the duty of opportune utterance. When the Despatch of the 31st of May was once on the road to Constantinople, England stood bound, and all that might be afterwards said about it would be criticism rather than counsel.

So ended one phase of the ancient strife between the Emperor Nicholas and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. Prince Mentschikoff, landing at Odessa, hastened to despatch to his master the best account he could give of the causes of his discomfiture, and of the evil skill of that Antichrist, in stately English form, whom Heaven was permitting for a while to triumph over the Czar and his Church.

Powers intrusted to Lord Stratford.

Lord Stratford reaped the fruit of his toil and of the long-endured pain of encountering violence with moderation. All his acts were approved by the Government, and, so far as they were known and understood, by the bulk of his countrymen at home. And now when he paced the shady gardens, where often he had put upon his anger a difficult restraint, he could look with calm joy to the headland where the Straits opened out into the Euxine, for he knew that the Governments of the Western Powers, supporting his every word, and even overstepping his more sober policy, were coming forward to stand between Russia and her prey. The fleet at Malta was to be moved when and whither he chose; and, even to the length of war, the Admiral was ordered to obey any requisitions made to him by the Ambas-

sador.* A few days later the Governments of Paris and London, fearing the consequence of delay, ordered the fleets to move up at once to the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles.† The power to choose between peace and war went from out of the Courts of Paris and London and passed to Constantinople. Lord Stratford was worthy of this trust; for being firm, and supplied with full knowledge, and having power by his own mere ascendancy to enforce moderation upon the Turks, and to forbid panic, and even to keep down tumult, he was able to be very chary in the display of force, and to be more frugal than the Government at home in using or engaging the power of the English Queen. He remained on the ground. Still, as before, he kept down the home dangers which threatened the Ottoman State. Still, as before, he obliged the Turks to deserve the good-will of Europe; but now, besides, with the arm of the flesh, and no longer with the mere fencing of words, he was there to defend their capital from the gathered rage of the Czar. In truth, at this time he bore much of the weight of empire. Intrusted with the chief prerogative of kings, and living all his time at Therapia, close over the gates of the Bosphorus, he seemed to stand guard against the North, and to answer for the safety of his charge.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 199. † Pp. 210, 225.

CHAPTER XII.

CHAP. XII.

Rage of the Czar.

THE mere sensation of being at strife with the English Ambassador at Constantinople, had kindled in the bosom of the Emperor Nicholas a rage so fierce as to drive him beyond the bounds of policy; but when he came to know the details of the struggle, and to see how, at every step, his Ambassador had been encountered—and, finally, when he heard (for that was the maddening thought) that, by counsels always obeyed, Lord Stratford was calmly exercising a protectorate of all the Churches in Turkey, including the very Church of him the Czar, him the Father, him the Pontiff of Eastern Christendom—he was wrought into such a condition of mind that his fury broke away from the restraint of even the very pride which begot it. Pride counselled the calm use of force, an order to the Admiral at Sebastopol, the silent march of battalions. But the Czar had so lost the control of his anger, that everywhere, and to all who would look upon the sight, he showed the wounds inflicted upon him by his hated adversary. 'He addressed,' said Lord Clarendon, 'to the different Courts of 'Europe, unmeasured complaints of Lord Stratford.

'To him, and to him alone, he attributed the failure 'of Prince Mentschikoff's mission.'* 'An incurable 'mistrust, a vehement activity,' said Count Nesselrode,† 'had characterised the whole of Lord Strat- 'ford's conduct during the latter part of the nego- 'tiation.'

Even in formal despatches the Czar caused his Minister to speak as though there were absolutely no government at Constantinople except the mere will of Lord Stratford. 'The English Ambassador,' Count Nesselrode said, 'persisted in refusing us any kind 'of guarantee;'† and then the Count went on to picture the Turkish Ministers as prostrate before the English Ambassador, and vainly entreating him to let them yield to Russia. 'Reshid Pasha,' said he, 'struck with the dangers which the departure of our 'Legation might entail upon the Porte, earnestly 'conjured the British Ambassador not to oppose the 'acceptance of the Note drawn up by Prince Ments- 'chikoff; but Lord Redcliffe prevented its acceptance 'by declaring that the Note was equivalent to a treaty, 'and was inadmissible.'† This last story, it has been seen, was the work of mere fiction;‡ but in the Czar Nicholas, as well as in Prince Mentschikoff, there were remains of the Oriental nature which made him ready to believe in the boundless power of a mortal, and he seems to have received without question the fables with which the Eastern mind was portraying the unbending, implacable Eltchi. It was vain to show

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 268. † Ibid. p. 243.

‡ This is proved very clearly. Ibid. p. 336 *et seq.*

CHAP. XII.

a monarch, thus wrought to anger, that the difference between him and the terrible Ambassador lay simply in the fact that the one was in the wrong and the other in the right. The thought of this only made the discomfiture more bitter. In the eyes of the Czar, Lord Stratford's way of keeping himself eternally in the right and eternally moderate was the mere contrivance, the mere inverted Jesuitism, of a man resolved to do good in order that evil might come—resolved to be forbearing and just for the sake of doing a harm to the Church. It was plain that, to assuage the torment which the Czar was enduring, the remedy was action: yet, strange to say, this disturber of Europe, who seemed to pass his life in preparing soldiery, was not at all ready for a war even against the Sultan alone. His preparations had been stopped in the beginning of March, and the movements which his troops had been making in Bessarabia were movements in the nature of threats. He wished to do some signal act of violence without plunging into war.

The Danubian Principalities.

The disposition of the Russian forces on the banks of the Pruth had long been breeding rumours that the Emperor Nicholas meditated an occupation of the Principalities called Wallachia and Moldavia. These provinces formed a part of the Ottoman dominions in Europe; but they were held by the Sultan under arrangements which modified their subjection to the Porte and gave them the character of tributary States. Each of them was governed by a prince called a Hospodar, who received his investi-

ture at Constantinople; but the Sultan was precluded by treaty from almost all interference with the internal government of the provinces, and was even debarred the right of sending any soldiery into their territories. Russia, on the other hand, had acquired over these provinces a species of protectorate; and, in the event of their being disturbed by internal anarchy, she had power to aid in repressing the disorder by military occupation. This contingency had not occurred in either of the provinces; but the anomalous form of their political existence caused the Emperor Nicholas to imagine that, by occupying them with a military force, and professing to hold them as a pledge, he could find for himself a middle course betwixt peace and war; and the thought was welcome to him, because, being angry and irresolute, he had been painfully driven to and fro, and was glad to compound with his passion.

The Czar's scheme for occupying them.

On the 31st of May Count Nesselrode addressed a letter to Reshid Pasha, urging the Porte to accept without variation the draft of the Note submitted to it by Prince Mentschikoff and announcing that, if the Porte should fail to do this within a period of eight days, the Russian army, after a few weeks, would cross the frontier, in order to obtain 'by force, but 'without war,' that which the Porte should decline to give up of its own accord. It was afterwards explained that this plan of resorting to violence without war was to be carried into effect by occupying the Danubian Principalities, and holding them as a security for the Sultan's compliance.

CHAP. XII.

But, in the second week of June, the Despatch which brought to the Sultan a virtual alliance with England was already at Constantinople, and the English fleet was coming up from Malta to the mouth of the Dardanelles under orders to obey the word of the English Ambassador. Before the moment came for despatching an answer to Count Nesselrode's summons, both the French and the English fleets were at anchor close outside the Straits, in waters called Besica Bay. Thus supported, the Porte at once refused to give Russia the Note demanded; but, under Lord Stratford's counsel, it did this in terms of deferential courtesy, and in a way which left open a door to future negotiation.

Efforts to effect an accommodation.

In all the capitals of the five great Powers, as well as at Constantinople, great efforts were made to bring about an accommodation, and it is certain that at intervals, if not continually, the Emperor Nicholas sought the means of retreating without ridicule from the ground on which his violence had placed him. It might seem that this was a condition of things in which diplomacy ought to have been able to act with effect; but it is hard for any one acquainted with the Despatches to say that the Statesmen intrusted with the duty of labouring for this end were wanting in energy or in skill. It was the Czar's ancient hatred of Sir Stratford Canning which defied the healing art. What Nicholas wanted was to be able to force upon the Porte some measure which was keenly disapproved by Lord Stratford; and if it could have been shown that the English

Ambassador had led the Turks into an untenable ground, there would have been an opportunity of giving the Czar this gratification; but Lord Stratford's moderation had been so firmly maintained, his sight had been always so clear and just, and his advice had gone so close to the edge of what could safely be conceded by the Turks, that (without doing a gross wrong to the Sultan) it was hardly possible to contrive any way of giving the Czar a semblance of triumph over the English Ambassador.

Defective representation of France, Austria, and Prussia, at the Court of St Petersburg.

From this time and thenceforth down to the final rupture between Russia and the Western Powers, there was a cause of evil at work which was every day tending to draw the Czar on into danger. Austria, Prussia, and France were unfitly represented at St Petersburg. In order to understand the nature of this evil, it must be remembered that in the reign of Nicholas the society of the Russian capital was what in the last century used to go by the name of a 'Court.' It was a mere group of men and women gathered always around one centre, bending always their eyes on one man, and striving to divine his will. Moreover, the worshippers were always watching to see who was in favour and who was in disgrace; and whoever was seen to be in favour with the Czar was brought into favour with all; and whoever was believed to have incurred the Czar's displeasure, was immediately forced to perceive that he had become displeasing to the rest of his fellow-creatures. Strange to say, the members of the diplomatic body were not exempt from these vicissitudes:

CHAP. XII.

if a foreign envoy felt obliged to offer resistance to the imperial will, his life was made cold and gloomy to him; and, on the other hand, he was sure to be well caressed if he chose to cringe to the Czar. This condition of society made it a matter of great moment for foreign States to be represented at St Petersburg by men of high spirit and endued with some strength of will. Unhappily for the peace of Europe, France was represented at St Petersburg by M. Castelbajac, Austria by Count Mensdorf, and Prussia by Colonel Rochow; and at a time when the Governments which they professed to represent were labouring to repress the violence of Russia by a policy of almost hostile resistance, these three men had suffered themselves to become the mere courtiers of the Czar.*

Sir Hamilton Seymour alone held language corresponding with the disapproval which the acts of the Czar were exciting in Central Europe as well as in France and England. He alone represented at St Petersburg the judgment of the four Powers. From the moment when the occupation of the Principalities was first threatened, he always treated it as an act perilous to the tranquillity of Europe, and always declined to give any measure of the extent to which it was likely to affect the relations between Russia and England. In using this wholesome language he was left without support from any of his colleagues.

* It is conceived that the facts which will be hereafter stated in connection with the names of these men are alone sufficient to justify the statement in the text.

Of course, in a literal way, the representatives of Austria, Prussia, and France obeyed their orders, and remonstrated when they were directed to do so; but the Czar was so prone to believe what he wished to be true, that diplomatists who were forced to make painful communications to his Government could easily do a great deal to blunt the edge of their instructions. So, although in Europe the Czar was isolated, yet in Europe, as represented at St Petersburg, the true order of things was reversed. There, it was Sir Hamilton Seymour who stood alone. More than this, it was believed at St Petersburg that the delinquency of M. Castelbajac often went beyond mere inaction, and that when the Czar was pained and discouraged by the reserve or the warning language of the Queen's representative, he was accustomed to turn for solace to the complaisant Frenchman, who was always ready to assure him that Sir Hamilton Seymour's grave tone was the sheer whim of an obstinate Englishman.

The Czar's reliance upon the acquiescence of England.

The Emperor Nicholas had laid down for himself a rule which was always to guide his conduct upon the Eastern Question; and it seems to be certain that, at this time, even in his most angry moments, he intended to cling to his resolve. What he had determined was, that no temptation should draw him into hostile conflict with England. He did not know that already he was breaking away from England, and rapidly going adrift. Persisting in the belief that the opposition which he had been encountering at Constantinople was the work of the English Ambas-

CHAP. XII.

sador, and of him alone, or at worst of the Foreign Office, he refused to accept the conviction that he was falling out with the English people, or even with the English Government. It was in vain that Lord Clarendon, in words as clear as day, disclosed the anger and the growing determination of the Cabinet. It was in vain that, by grave words and by pregnant reserve, Sir Hamilton Seymour strove to warn the Czar of the danger which he was bringing upon his relations with England. The Czar imagined that he knew better. 'My dear Sir Hamilton,' Count Nesselrode seemed to say, 'you have lived away from 'your country so long that, forgive me, you do not 'know its condition and temper. We do. We have 'studied it. Your Foreign Office speaks as if we 'did not know that England has her weak point. 'My dear Sir Hamilton, we have mastered the 'whole subject of the "School of Manchester." Cer- 'tainly it cost us some trouble, but we have now 'made out the difference between a "Meeting" on a 'Sunday morning, and a "Meeting" on a Monday 'night. Nothing escapes us. We comprehend the 'Society of Friends. Pardon me, Sir Hamilton, 'for saying so, but your country is notoriously 'engaged in commerce. With that we shall not 'interfere.'

In truth, the Czar's theory was, that the foreign policy of the English Government was dictated by the people, and that the people loved money, and for the sake of money loved peace. In other words, he thought that the English nation had undergone

what historians term 'corruption.' As far as he could make out, the vast expanse of men and women which presented itself to his imagination under the name of 'the people' was the same sort of thing as the crowd which went to hear a fierce speech against princes, and statesmen, and parliaments, and armies, and navies, and taxes. He also thought that the cheers which this crowd uttered at the end of sentences denouncing war, were proof of a settled determination to prevent any Government from ever again breaking the peace without stringent reasons. A deeper knowledge would have taught him that what the crowd applauded was not the mere doctrine, but the pure racy strenuous English, and the animating ferocity of the speaker: for, in speeches of this kind, praises of peace were always blended with rough attacks upon public men; and therefore, to a shallow observer, the hearers might seem to be lifting up their voices for peace and good-will among men, when in reality they were only acknowledging the pleasantness of the sensation which is produced by hearing good invective. A prince of the Russian Emperor's breed might have known that, even if it be given in praise or in joy, the 'hurrah' of a northern people has in it a sound of conflict. What it negatives and forbids is peace and rest. His battalions were destined to hear it some day, to know its import, and to blend it long afterwards with recollections of mist and slaughter, and the breaking strength of Russia. But to the mind of the Czar at this time, the cheering which

CHAP. XII.

greeted the thin phantom of the 'Peace Party' imported a determination of the English people to abdicate their place in Europe; and in proportion as this belief fixed its hold upon his mind, the tranquillity of the world was brought into danger.

Another unhappy circumstance tended to keep the Czar in his fatal error. Lord Aberdeen was the Prime Minister. He was a pure and upright statesman, and it can be said that the more closely he was known the more he was honoured; for his friends always saw in him higher qualities than he was able to disclose to the general world by writing, or by speech, or by action. It was his lot to do much towards bringing upon his country a great calamity. He drew down war by suffering himself to have an undue horror of it. With good and truly peaceful intentions, he was every day breaking down one of the surest of the safeguards which protected the peace of Europe. This he did by the dangerous language which he suffered himself to hold almost down to the time of Baron Brunnow's departure from London. If judges were to declare their horror of justice, and make it appear that they would be likely to shrink from the duty of passing sentence on one of their erring fellow-creatures, they would invite the world to pillage and murder; but they would be committing a fault less grave than that of which Lord Aberdeen was guilty. He was chief of the Government, intrusted with the forces of the State. To be chary of the use of means so puissant for good and for evil is one of the most solemn charges that can

be cast upon man; but for a ruler to give out that the sword of the State will be in his hands a thing loathed and cast aside, is to be guilty of a dereliction of duty fraught with instant danger. To all who would listen, Lord Aberdeen used to say that he abhorred the very thought of war; and that he was sure it would not and could not occur. He caused men to believe that, except for weighty and solemn cause, no war would be undertaken with his concurrence. Relying on a Prime Minister's words, the Emperor Nicholas felt certain that Lord Aberdeen would not carry England into a war for the sake of a difference between the wording of a Note demanded by Prince Mentschikoff and the wording of a Note proposed by the Turks. It is true that Baron Brunnow had the sagacity to understand that imprudent and timid language, though coming from the lips of a Prime Minister, would not necessarily be binding upon the high-spirited people of England; and he, no doubt, warned his master accordingly, even at the time when he was conveying to him Lord Aberdeen's words of peace; but it was so delightful to the Czar to remain under the impression produced by the language of the English Prime Minister, and, moreover, this language was so closely in harmony with the apparent feelings of the active little crowd which he had mistaken for 'the English 'people,' that he could not or would not forego his illusion.

It is believed that the errors of Lord Aberdeen did not end here. In a conversation between Lord

CHAP. XII.

Clarendon and Baron Brunnow, our Foreign Secretary, they say, spoke a plain, firm sentence, disclosing the dangers which the occupation of the Principalities would bring upon the relations between Russia and England. The wholesome words were flying to St Petersburg. They would have destroyed the Czar's illusion, and they therefore bade fair to preserve the peace of Europe; but when Lord Aberdeen came to know what had been uttered, he insisted, they say, and insisted with effect, that Baron Brunnow should be requested to consider Lord Clarendon's words as unspoken. Of course, after a fatal revocation like this, it would be hard indeed to convince the Czar that his encroachment was provoking the grave resistance of England.

Orders for the occupation of the Principalities.

The Emperor Nicholas was alone, in his accustomed writing-room in the Palace of Czarskoe Selo, when he came to the resolve which followed upon the discomfiture of Prince Mentschikoff. He took no counsel. He rang a bell. Presently an officer of his Staff stood before him. To him he gave his orders for the occupation of the Principalities. Afterwards he told Count Orloff what he had done. Count Orloff became grave, and said, 'This is war.' The Czar was surprised to hear that the Count took so gloomy a view. He was sure that no country would stir against him without the concurrence of England, and he was certain that, because of her Peace Party, her traders, and her Prime Minister, it was impossible for England to move.

It was thus that by rashness and want of modera-

tion men truly attached to the cause of peace were encouraging the wrong-doer, and rapidly bringing upon Europe the calamity which they most abhorred.

The Pruth passed.

On the 2d July the Emperor Nicholas caused his forces to pass the Pruth, and laid hold of the two Principalities.

Russian Manifesto.

On the following day a manifesto was read in the churches of All the Russias.* 'It is known,' said the Czar, 'to all our faithful subjects that the defence of the Orthodox religion was from time immemorial the vow of our glorious forefathers. From the time that it pleased Providence to intrust to us our hereditary throne, the defence of these holy obligations inseparable from it was the constant object of our solicitude and care; and these, based on the glorious treaty of Kainardji, confirmed by other solemn treaties, were ever directed to insure the inviolability of the Orthodox Church. But to our great grief, recently, in despite of our efforts to defend the inviolability of the rights and privileges of our Orthodox Church, various arbitrary acts of the Porte have infringed these rights, and threaten at last the complete overthrow of the long-perpetuated order so dear to Orthodoxy. Having exhausted all persuasion, we have found it needful to advance our armies into the Danubian Principalities, in order to show the Ottoman Porte to what its obstinacy may lead. But even now we have not the intention to commence war. By the occupation of the Principalities we desire to have such a security as

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 357.

CHAP. XII.

'will insure us the restoration of our rights. It is 'not conquest that we seek; Russia needs it not; we 'seek satisfaction for a just right so clearly infringed. 'We are ready even now to arrest the movement of 'our armies, if the Ottoman Porte will bind itself 'solemnly to observe the inviolability of the Ortho- 'dox Church. But if blindness and obstinacy decide 'for the contrary, then, calling God to our aid, we 'shall leave the decision of the struggle to Him, and, 'in full confidence in His omnipotent right hand, we 'shall march forward for the Orthodox Church.'*

Course taken by the Sultan.

By declaring that his military occupation of these provinces was not an act of war, the Emperor Nicholas did not escape from any part of the responsibility naturally attaching to the invasion of a neighbour's territory; and yet, by making this announcement, he committed the error of enabling the Porte to choose its own time for the final rupture. The Sultan was advised by Lord Stratford, and afterwards by the Home Governments of the Western Powers, that although he was entitled, if he chose, to look upon the seizure of the tributary provinces as a clear invasion of his territory, he was not obliged to treat it as an act which placed him at war, and that for the moment it was wise for him to hold back. Upon this counsel the Sultan acted; and in truth the latitude which it gave him was highly convenient, because he was ill-prepared for an immediate encounter. Therefore, without yet going to a rupture, the Turkish Government exerted itself to make ready for war.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 323.

Religious character of the threatened war.

In States religiously constituted, the preparation for war is begun by preaching it; and now in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa, wherever there were Turkish dominions, the Moslems were called to arms by a truculent course of sermons. In the churches of Russia there was a like appeal to the piety of the multitude. Of course the members of the two disputing Governments were much under the influence of temporal motives; but by the people of both Empires the war now believed to be impending was regarded as a war for Religion.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHAP. XIII.

THE Czar had no sooner uttered his threat to occupy the Principalities, than he found himself met by the unanimous disapproval of the other great Powers of Europe. Nor was this a barren expression of opinion. From the time of the accomplishment of Count Leiningen's mission, Austria had never ceased to declare her adhesion to her accustomed policy; and the moment that she saw herself endangered by the Czar's determination to send troops into Wallachia and Moldavia, she became, as it was her interest and her duty to be, a resolute opponent of Russia. And her resistance was of more value than that of any other Power, because she was so placed in reference to the Principalities that, at any moment and without any very hard effort, she could make her will the law. Of course the Czar might resent the interference of Austria and declare war against her; but in such a case he would necessarily place the scene of hostilities upon another part of her frontier. It was not possible for him with common prudence to wind round the frontier of the Austrian Empire, and at-

Effect of the Czar's threat upon European Powers.

Its effect upon Austria.

tempt to keep troops in Wallachia, if he were liable to attack from Transylvania and the Banat.

Clearly, then, it rested with Austria to prevent or redress the threatened outrage. Her resolution was never doubtful. Before the end of May Count Buol represented at St Petersburg the danger of the proceedings adopted by Prince Mentschikoff;* and on the 17th of June he declared that he considered himself as 'entirely united' with England in her policy towards the Turkish Empire, that he regarded 'the 'maintenance of its independence and integrity as of 'the most essential importance to the best interests 'of Austria,' and that he would employ all the 'means in his power to effect that object.' He promised that he would take no engagement with Russia not to oppose her 'with arms;' and he added that 'should he be called upon to carry out an 'armed intervention on the frontiers, it would be 'in support of the authority and independence of 'the Sultan.'†

Upon Prussia.

The opinion of Prussia was scarcely less decided. On the 30th of May Lord Bloomfield was able to report that the impression made upon the Government of Berlin by the last reports from Turkey was 'most 'unfavourable to the Russian Government;' and Baron Manteuffel declared that Prince Mentschikoff had gone far beyond everything that the Prussian Government had been given to expect, and he could hardly believe but that the Prince would be disavowed.‡ Three days later the Prussian Government

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 224. † Ibid. p. 291. ‡ Ibid. p. 223.

CHAP. XIII.

conveyed this impression to the Court of St Petersburg;* and on the 7th Lord Clarendon expressed his satisfaction at the views taken and the course of the policy indicated both by the Court of Berlin and the Court of Vienna.†

Effect produced by the actual invasion of the Principalities.

This was the effect produced by the threat contained in Count Nesselrode's summons; but when the invasion of the Principalities took place, and came to be known in Europe, it quickly appeared that the uneasiness excited by the actual occurrence of the event was more than proportioned to that which sprang from the mere expectation of it. In Austria the uneasiness of the Government was so great that it dissolved the close relations of friendship lately subsisting between the Courts of Petersburg and Vienna; and within three days from the time when Russia crossed the Pruth, Count Buol, abandoning the notion of 'acting singly,' which had been entertained some days before,‡ began to lay the foundations of a league well fitted to repress the Czar's encroachment without plunging Europe in war.

In Austria.

'The entry of the Russian troops into the Princi-
'palities,' wrote Lord Westmoreland to the English Secretary of State, 'is looked upon with the greatest
'possible regret; and I am requested by Count Buol
'to state this to your Lordship, as also to announce
'to you his intention immediately to convey this
'feeling to the Russian Cabinet, together with the
'expression of the disappointment he has felt at the

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 227. † Ibid. p. 230. ‡ Ibid. p. 320.

'sudden adoption of this measure while there still 'existed the hope of an arrangement at Constanti- 'nople. Count Buol expressed his entire satisfaction 'with the language your Lordship had held to Count 'Colloredo, agreeing as he does with the policy you 'recommend, and with the necessity which would 'arise, in case the invasion of the Principalities took 'place, of concerting measures among the Powers 'parties to the treaties of 1841, with the view of 'obtaining from the Russian Cabinet the most dis- 'tinct declarations as to the objects of that move- 'ment, and the term which would be fixed for its 'duration.'*

In France and England.

On the other hand, the Governments of France and England, with less cause for anxiety about countries so remote as the provinces of the Lower Danube, were angrily impatient of the Czar's intrusion.

In Prussia.

Prussia, hitherto supposed to be hardly capable of differing with the Emperor Nicholas, did not fear to express her disapproval in decisive terms; and the Cabinet of Berlin instructed the King's Envoy at Constantinople to 'unite cordially' with the representatives of Austria, France, and England.†

Attitude of Europe generally.

In short, the attitude of Europe towards the Russian Emperor was exactly that which a lover of peace and of order might desire to witness; for the wrong-doer was left without an ally in the world, and was resisted by the four great Powers, with the assent of the other States of Europe.

Concord of the four Powers.

It was plain, moreover, that this resistance would not evaporate in mere

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 356. † Ibid. p. 355.

CHAP. XIII.

remonstrance or protest; for if Austria was the country most endangered by the seizure of the Principalities, she was also the Power which could most easily extirpate the evil, because, whenever she chose, she could fall upon the flank and rear of the Russian invaders by issuing through the passes of the Eastern Carpathian range, or the frontier which touched the Banat. Moreover, France and England, by bringing their fleets into the Levant, by causing them to approach the Dardanelles, by passing the Straits, by anchoring in the Golden Horn, by ascending the Bosphorus, by cruising in the Euxine, and, finally, by interdicting the Russian flag from its waters, could always inflict a graduated torture upon the Czar, and (even without going to the extremity of war) could make it impossible that the indignation of Europe should remain unheeded.

Their means of repression.

The concord of the States opposing the Czar's encroachment was already so well perfected that, on the very day* when the Russian advance-guard crossed the Pruth, the representatives of the four Powers assembled in Conference, determined to address to Russia a collective Note pressing the Czar to put his claims against Turkey in conformity with the sovereign rights of the Sultan. Here was the very principle for which France and England had been contending; and it was obvious that if this concerted action of the four Powers should last, it would insure peace: for, in the first place, any resistance to their united will would be hopeless; and,

Their joint measures.

Importance of maintaining close concert between the four Powers.

* 2d July 1853.

on the other hand, a Prince whose spirit rebelled against the idea of yielding to States which he looked upon as adversaries, might gracefully give way to the award of assembled Europe. In short, the four Powers could coerce without making war; and the business of a statesman who sought to maintain the peace and good order of Europe was to keep them united, taking care that no mere shades of difference should part them, and that nothing short of a violent and irreconcilable change on the part of one or more of the Powers should dissolve a confederacy, which promised to insure the continuance of peace and a speedy enforcement of justice.

How came it to happen that in the midst of all this harmony there supervened a policy which discarded the principle of a peaceful coercion applied by the whole of the remonstrant Powers, and raised up in its stead a threatening alliance which was powerful enough to wage a bloody and successful war, but was without that more wholesome measure of strength which can enforce justice without inflicting humiliation, and without resort to arms? How came it to happen that within six days from the date of the collective Note, and without the intervening occurrence of any new event, the concert of the four Powers was suddenly superseded and paralysed by the announcement of a separate understanding between two of them?

It was not for reasons of State that by one of the high contracting parties this evil course was designed; and in order to see how it came to be possible that

CHAP. XIII.

the vast interests of Europe should be set aside in favour of mere personal objects, it will presently be necessary to contract the field of vision, and, going back to the winter of 1851, to glance at the operations of a small knot of middle-aged men who were pushing their fortunes in Paris.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHAP. XIV.

State of the French Republic in Nov. 1851.

In the beginning of the winter of 1851 France was still a republic; but the Constitution of 1848 had struck no root. There was a feeling that the country had been surprised and coerced into the act of declaring itself a republic, and that a monarchical system of government was the only one adapted for France. The sense of instability which sprang from this belief was connected with an agonising dread of insurrections like those which, forty months before, had filled the streets of Paris with scenes of bloodshed. Moreover, to those who watched and feared, it seemed that the shadow on the dial was moving on with a terrible steadiness to the hour when a return to anarchy was, as it were, pre-ordained by law; for the Constitution required that a new President should be chosen in the spring of the following year, and the French, being by nature of a keen and anxious temperament, cannot endure that lasting pressure upon the nerves which is inflicted by a long-impending danger. Their impulse under such trials is to rush forward, or to run

CHAP. XIV.

back, and what they are least inclined to do is to stand still and be calm, or make a steady move to the front.

In general, France thought it best that, notwithstanding the Rule of the Constitution which stood in the way, the then President should be quietly re-elected; and a large majority of the Assembly, faithfully representing this opinion, had come to a vote which sought to give it effect; but their desire was baffled by an unwise provision of the Republican Charter, which had laid it down that no constitutional change should take place without the sanction of three-fourths of the Assembly. By this clumsy bar the action of the State system was hampered, and many, whose minds generally inclined them to respect legality, were forced to acknowledge that the Constitution wanted a wrench. Still, the republic had long been free from serious outbreak. The law was obeyed; and indeed the determination to maintain order at all sacrifices was so strong that, even upon somewhat slight foundation, the President had been intrusted with power to place under martial law any districts in which disturbances seemed likely to occur. The struggles which went on in the Chamber, though they were unsightly in the eyes of military men and of those who love the decisiveness and consistency of despotism, were rather signs of healthy political action than of danger to the State. It is not true, as was afterwards pretended, that the Executive was wickedly or perversely thwarted either by the votes of the Assembly or by the speeches of its members;

still less is it true that the representative body was engaged in hatching plots against the President; and although the army, remembering the humiliations of 1848, was in ill-humour with the people, and was willing upon any fit occasion to act against them, there was no general officer of any repute who would consent to fire a shot without what French Commanders deemed to be the one lawful warrant for action—an order from the Minister of War.

Prince Louis Bonaparte.

But the President of the republic was Prince Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the statutory heir of the first French Emperor.* The election which made him the chief of the State had been conducted with perfect fairness; and since it happened that in former years he had twice engaged in enterprises which aimed at the throne of France, he had good right to infer that the millions of citizens who elected him into the Presidency were willing to use his ambition as a means of restoring to France a monarchical form of government.

But if he had been open in disclosing the ambition which was almost cast upon him by the circumstances of his birth, he had been as successful as the first Brutus in passing for a man of a poor intellect. Both in France and in England, at that time, men in general imagined him to be dull. When he talked, the flow of his ideas was sluggish: his features were opaque; and, after years of dreary studies, the writings evolved by his thoughtful, long-pondering mind had not shed much light on the world. Even the

* *i.e.*, by the Senatus-Consulte of 1804.

CHAP. XIV.

strange ventures in which he had engaged had failed to win towards him the interest which commonly attaches to enterprise. People in London who were fond of having gatherings of celebrated characters never used to present him to their friends as a serio pretender to a throne, but rather as though he were a balloon-man who had twice had a fall from the skies, and was still in some measure alive. Yet the more men knew him in England, the more they liked him. He entered into English pursuits, and rode fairly to hounds. He was friendly, social, good-humoured, and willing enough to talk freely about his views upon the throne of France. The sayings he uttered about his 'destiny' were addressed (apparently as a matter of policy) to casual acquaintance; but to his intimate friends he used the language of a calculating and practical aspirant to Empire.

The opinion which men had formed of his ability in the period of exile was not much altered by his return to France: for in the Assembly his apparent want of mental power caused the world to regard him as harmless, and in the chair of the President he commonly seemed to be torpid. But there were always a few who believed in his capacity; and observant men had latterly remarked that from time to time there appeared a State Paper, understood to be the work of the President, which teemed with thought, and which showed that the writer, standing solitary and apart from the gregarious nation of which he was the chief, was able to contemplate it as something

external to himself. His long, endless study of the mind of the First Napoleon had caused him to adopt and imitate the Emperor's habit of looking down upon the French people, and treating the mighty nation as a substance to be studied and controlled by a foreign brain. Indeed, during the periods of his imprisonment and of his exile, the relations between him and the France of his studies were very like the relations between an anatomist and a corpse. He lectured upon it; he dissected its fibres; he explained its functions; he showed how beautifully Nature, in her infinite wisdom, had adapted it to the service of the Bonapartes; and how, without the fostering care of those same Bonapartes, the creature was doomed to degenerate, and to perish out of the world. CHAP. XIV.

If his intellect was of a poorer quality than men supposed it to be at the time of the Anglo-French alliance, it was much above the low gauge which people used to assign to it in the earlier period which began in 1836 and ended at the close of 1851. That which had so long veiled his cleverness from the knowledge of mankind, was the repulsive nature of the science at which he laboured. Many men before him had suffered themselves to bring craft into politics; many more, toiling in humbler grades, had applied their cunning skill to the conflicts which engage courts of law; but no living man perhaps, except Prince Louis Bonaparte, had passed the hours of a studious youth, and the prime of a thoughtful manhood, in contriving how to apply stratagem to the science of jurisprudence. It was not, perhaps,

CHAP. XIV.

from natural baseness that his mind took this bent. The inclination to sit and sit planning for the attainment of some object of desire—this, indeed, was in his nature; but the inclination to labour at the task of making law an engine of deceit—this did not come perforce with his blood. Yet it came with his parentage. It is true, he might have determined to reject the indication given him by the accident of his birth, and to remain a private citizen; but when once he resolved to become a pretender to the imperial throne, he of course had to try and see how it was possible —how it was possible in the midst of this century—that the coarse Bonaparte yoke of 1804 could be made to sit kindly upon the neck of France; and France being a European nation, and the yoke being in substance a yoke such as Tartars make for Chinese, it followed that the accommodating of the one to the other was only to be effected by guile.

Therefore, by the sheer exigencies of his inheritance rather than by inborn wickedness, Prince Louis was driven to be a contriver; and to expect him to be loyal to France without giving up his pretensions altogether, would be as inconsistent as to say that the heir of the first Perkin might undertake to revive the fleeting glories of the House of Warbeck, and yet refrain from imposture.

For years the Prince pursued his strange calling, and by the time his studies were over he had become highly skilled. Long before the moment had come for bringing his crooked science into use, he had learnt how to frame a Constitution which should

seem to enact one thing and really enact another. He knew how to put the word 'jury' in laws which robbed men of their freedom; he could set the snare which he called 'universal suffrage;' he knew how to strangle a nation in the night-time with a thing he called a 'Plebiscite.'

The lawyer-like ingenuity which had thus been evoked for purposes of jurisprudence could, of course, be applied to the composition of State Papers and to political writings of all kinds; and the older Prince Louis grew, the more this odd accomplishment of his was used to subserve his infirmities. It was his nature to remain long in suspense, not merely between similar, but even between opposite plans of action. This weakness grew upon him with his years; and his conscience being used to stand neuter in these mental conflicts, he never could end his doubt by seeing that one course was honest and the other not; so, in order to be able to linger safely in his suspense, he had to be always making resting-places upon which for a time he might be able to stand undecided. Just as the indolent man becomes clever in framing excuses for his delays, so Prince Louis, because he was so often hesitating between the right and the left, became highly skilled in contriving not merely ambiguous phrases, but ambiguous schemes of action.

Partly from habits acquired in the secret societies of the Italian Carbonari, partly from long years passed in prison, and partly too, as he once said, from his intercourse with the calm, self-possessed men of

CHAP. XIV.

the English turf, he had derived the power of keeping long silence; but he was not by nature a reserved nor a secret man. Towards foreigners, and especially towards the English, he was generally frank. He was reserved and wary with the French, but this was upon the principle which makes a sportsman reserved and wary with deer and partridges and trout. No doubt, he was capable of dissembling, and continuing to dissemble through long periods of time; but it would seem that his faculty of keeping his intentions secret was very much aided by the fact that his judgment was often in real suspense, and that he had therefore no secret to tell. His love of masks and disguises sprang more, perhaps, from the odd vanity and the theatric mania which will be presently spoken of, than from a base love of deceit; for it is certain that the mystery in which he loved to wrap himself up was often contrived with a view to a melodramatic surprise.

It is believed that men do him wrong who speak of him as void of all idea of truth. He understood truth, and in conversation he habitually preferred it to falsehood; but his truthfulness (though not perhaps contrived for such an end) sometimes became a means of deception, because, after generating confidence, it would suddenly break down under the pressure of a strong motive. He could maintain friendly relations with a man, and speak frankly and truthfully to him for seven years, and then suddenly deceive him. Of course, men, finding themselves ensnared by what had appeared to be honesty in his

character, were naturally inclined to believe that every semblance of a good quality was a mask; but it is more consistent with the principles of human nature to believe that a truthfulness continuing for seven years was a genuine remnant of virtue, than that it was a mere preparation for falsehood. His doubting and undecided nature was a help to concealment; for men got so wearied by following the oscillations of his mind that their suspicions in time went to rest; and then, perhaps, when he saw that they were quite tired of predicting that he would do a thing, he gently stole out and did it.

He had boldness of the kind which is produced by reflection rather than that which is the result of temperament. In order to cope with the extraordinary perils into which he now and then thrust himself, and to cope with them decorously, there was wanted a fiery quality which nature had refused to the great bulk of mankind as well as to him. But it was only in emergencies of a really trying sort, and involving instant physical danger, that his boldness fell short. He had all the courage which would have enabled him in a private station of life to pass through the common trials of the world with honour unquestioned; but he had besides, now and then, a factitious kind of audacity produced by long dreamy meditation; and when he had wrought himself into this state, he was apt to expose his firmness to trials beyond his strength. The truth is, that his imagination had so great a sway over him as to make him love the idea of enterprises, but it had not strength enough to

CHAP. XIV.

give him a foreknowledge of what his sensations would be in the hour of trial. So he was most venturesome in his schemes for action ; and yet, when at last he stood face to face with the very danger which he had long been courting, he was liable to be scared by it, as though it were something new and strange.

He loved to contrive and brood over plots, and he had a great skill in making the preparatory arrangements for bringing his schemes to ripeness ; but his labours in this direction had a tendency to bring him into scenes for which by nature he was ill-fitted, because, like most of the common herd of men, he was unable to command the presence of mind and the flush of animal spirits which are needed for the critical moments of a daring adventure. In short, he was a thoughtful, literary man, deliberately tasking himself to venture into a desperate path, and going great lengths in that direction ; but liable to find himself balked in the moment of trial by the sudden and chilling return of his good sense.

He was not by nature bloodthirsty nor cruel, and besides that in small matters he had kind and generous instincts, he was really so willing to act fairly until the motive for foul play was strong, that for months and months together he was able to live amongst English sporting-men without incurring disgrace ; and if he was not so constituted nor so disciplined as to be able to refrain from any object of eager desire merely upon the theory that what he sought to do was wicked, there is ground for inferring that his perception of the difference between

right and wrong had been dimmed (as it naturally would be) by the habit of seeking an ideal of manly worth in a personage like the First Bonaparte. It would seem that (as a study, or out of curiosity, if not with a notion of being guided by it) he must have accustomed himself to hear sometimes what conscience had to say; for it is certain that, with a pen in his hand and with sufficient time for preparation, he could imitate very neatly the scrupulous language of a man of honour.*

What he always longed for was to be able to seize and draw upon himself the wondering attention of mankind; and the accident of his birth having marked out for him the throne of the First Napoleon as an object upon which he might fasten a hope, his craving for conspicuousness, though it had its true root in vanity, soon came to resemble ambition; but the mental isolation in which he was kept by the nature of his aims and his studies, the seeming poverty of his intellect, his blank wooden looks, and above all, perhaps, the supposed remoteness of his chances of success—these sources of discouragement, contrasting with the grandeur of the object at which he aimed, caused his pretension to be looked upon as

* See *inter alia* his address to the Electors, 29th Nov. 1848; his speech, read after taking the oath, 20th Dec. 1848; speech at Ham, 22d July 1849; ditto at Tours, 1st Aug. 1849; message to the Chambers, 3d Dec. 1849; ditto, 12th Nov. 1850. It will be seen (see *post*) that, according to my view, these declarations may have been composed at a time when he was really shrinking from treason; but if, as others suppose, they were intended to hoodwink the country, it must be owned that they counterfeited the sentiments of an honest man with extraordinary skill.

CHAP. XIV.

something merely comic and odd. Linked with this his passionate desire to attain to a height from which he might see the world gazing up at him, there was a strong and almost eccentric fondness for the artifices by which the framer of a melodrama, the stage-manager, and the stage-hero combine to produce their effects; and so, by the blended force of a passion and a fancy, he was impelled to be contriving scenic effects and surprises in which he himself was always to be the hero. This bent was so strong and dominant as to be not a mere taste for theatric arrangements, but rather what men call a propensity. Standing alone, it would have done no more, perhaps, than govern the character of his amusements; but since his birth had made him a pretender to the throne of France, his desire to imitate and reproduce the Empire supplied a point of contact between his theatric mania and what one may call his rational ambition; and the result was, that so long as he was in exile he was always filled with a desire to mimic Napoleon's return from Elba, and to do this in his own person and upon the stage of the actual world.

In some of its features his attempt at Strasburg in 1836 was a graver business than is commonly supposed. At that time he was twenty-eight years old. He had gained over Vaudrey, the officer commanding a regiment of artillery which formed part of the garrison. Early in the morning of Sunday the 30th of October the movement began. By declaring that a revolution had broken out in Paris, and that the King had been deposed, Vaudrey per-

suaded his gunners to recognise the Prince as Napoleon II. Vaudrey then caused detachments to march to the houses of the Prefect and of General Voirol, the General commanding the garrison, and made them both prisoners, placing sentries at their doors. All this he achieved without alarming any of the other regiments.

Supposing that there really existed among the troops a deep attachment to the name and family of Bonaparte, little more seemed needed for winning over the whole garrison than that the heir of the great Emperor should have the personal qualities requisite for the success of the enterprise. Prince Louis was brought into the presence of the captive General, and tried to gain him over, but was repulsed. Afterwards the Prince, surrounded with men personating an imperial staff, was conducted to the barrack of the 46th Regiment; and the men, taken entirely by surprise, were told that the person now introduced to them was their Emperor. What they saw was a young man with the bearing and countenance of a weaver—a weaver oppressed by long hours of monotonous indoor work, which makes the body stoop and keeps the eyes downcast; but all the while—and yet it was broad daylight—this young man, from hat to boot, was standing dressed up in the historic costume of the man of Austerlitz and Marengo. It seems that this painful exhibition began to undo the success which Vaudrey had achieved; but strange things had happened in Paris before, and the soldiery could not with certainty know that

CHAP. XIV.

the young man might not be what they were told he was—Napoleon II., the new-made Emperor of the French. Their perplexity gave the Prince an opportunity of trying whether the sentiment for the Bonapartes were really existing or not, and if it were, whether he was the man to kindle it.

But by-and-by Talandier, the Colonel of the regiment, having been at length apprised of what was going on, came into the yard. He instantly ordered the gates to be closed, and then—fierce, angry, and scornful — went straight up to the spot where the proposed Emperor and his 'Imperial Staff' were standing. Of course this apparition—the apparition of the indignant Colonel whose barrack had been invaded — was exactly what was to be expected, exactly what was to be combated; but yet, as though it were something monstrous and undreamt of, it came upon the Prince with a crushing power. To him, a literary man, standing in a barrack-yard in the dress of the great conqueror, an angry Colonel, with authentic warrant to command, was something real, and therefore, it seems, dreadful. In a moment Prince Louis succumbed to him. Some thought that, after what had been done that morning, the Prince owed it to the unfortunate Vaudrey (whom he had seduced into the plot) to take care not to let the enterprise collapse without testing his fortune to the utmost by a strenuous, not to say desperate resistance; but this view did not prevail. One of the ornaments which the Prince wore was a sword; yet, without striking a blow, he suffered himself to be publicly

stripped of his grand cordon of the Legion of Honour and all his other decorations.* According to one account, the angry Colonel inflicted this dishonour with his own hands, and not only pulled the grand cordon from the Prince's bosom, but tore off his epaulettes, and trampled both epaulettes and grand cordon under foot. When he had been thus stripped the Prince was locked up. The decorated followers, who had been impersonating the Imperial Staff, underwent the same fate as their chief. Before judging the Prince for his conduct during these moments, it would be fair to assume that, the Colonel having once been suffered to enter the yard, and to exert the ascendancy of his superior firmness, the danger of attempting resistance to him would have been great—would have been greater than any which the common herd of men are at all inclined to encounter. Besides, the mere fact that the Prince had wilfully brought himself into such a predicament shows that, although it might fail him in very trying moments, he had extraordinary daring of a particular kind. It would be unjust to say flatly that a man so willing as he was to make approaches to dangers was timid; it would be fairer to say that his characteristic was a faltering boldness. He could not alter his nature, and his nature was to be venturesome beforehand, but to be so violently awakened and

* Despatch of General Voirol, *Moniteur*, 2d Nov. After stating the arrival of Lt.-Col. Talandier in the barrack-yard, the despatch says, 'Dans une minute L. N. Bonaparte et les miserables qui avaient pris 'parti pour lui ont été arretés, et les décorations dont ils étaient revêtus 'ont été arrachées par les soldats du 46me.'

CHAP. XIV.

shocked by the actual contact of danger as to be left without the spirit, and seemingly without the wish or the motives, for going on any farther with the part of a desperado. The truth is, that the sources of his boldness were his vanity and his theatric bent; and these passions, though they had power to bring him to the verge of danger, were not robust enough to hold good against man's natural shrinking from the risk of being killed—being killed within the next minute. Conscious that in point of hat and coat and boots he was the same as the Emperor Napoleon, he imagined that the great revoir of 1815 between the men and the man of a hundred fights could be acted over again between modern French troops and himself; but it is plain that this belief had resulted from the undue mastery which he had allowed for a time to his ruling propensity, and not from any actual overthrow of the reason; for, when checked, he did not, like a madman or a dare-devil, try to carry his venture through; nor did he even, indeed, hold on long enough to try, and try fairly, whether the Bonapartist sentiment to which he wished to appeal were really existent or not: on the contrary, the moment he encountered the shock of the real world he stopped dead; and, becoming suddenly quiet, harmless, and obedient, surrendered himself (as he always has done) to the first firm man who touched him. The change was like that seeming miracle which is wrought when a hysteric girl, who seems to be carried headlong by strange hallucinations, and to be clothed with the terrible power of madness, is

suddenly cured and silenced by a rebuke and a sharp angry threat. Accepting a small sum of money* from the Sovereign whom he had been trying to dethrone, Prince Louis was shipped off to America by the good-natured King of the French.

But if he was wanting in the quality which enables a man to go well through with a venture, his ruling propensity had strength enough to make him try the same thing over and over again. His want of the personal qualifications for enterprises of this sort being now known in the French Army, and ridicule having fastened upon his name, he could not afterwards seduce into his schemes any officers of higher rank than a lieutenant. Yet he did not desist. Before long he was planning another 'return from Elba,' but this time with new dresses and decorations. So long as he was preparing counterfeit flags and counterfeit generals and counterfeit soldiers,† and teaching a forlorn London bird to play the part of an omen and guide the destiny of France, he was perfectly at home in that kind of statesmanship; and the framing of the plebiscites and proclamations, which formed a large part of his cargo, was a business of which he was master; but if his arrangements should take effect, then what he had to look for was, that at an early hour on a summer morning he would find himself in a barrack-yard at Boulogne surrounded by a band of

* £600.

† The dresses were made to counterfeit the uniform of the 42d, one of the regiments quartered at Boulogne; and buttons having on them the number of the regiment were forged for the purpose at Birmingham.

CHAP. XIV.

armed followers, and supported by one of the officers of the garrison whom he had previously gained over; but also having to do with a number of soldiery, of whom some would be for him and some inclining against him, and others confused and perplexed. Now, this was exactly what happened to him: his arrangements had been so skilful, and fortune had so far lured him on, that whither he meant to go, there he was at last, standing in the very circumstances which he had brought about with long design aforethought. But then his nature failed him. Becoming agitated, and losing his presence of mind,* he could not govern the result of the struggle by the resources of his intellect; and being also without the fire and the joyfulness which come to warlike men in moments of crisis and of danger, he was ill qualified to kindle the hearts of the bewildered soldiery. So, when at last a firm, angry officer† forced his way into the barrack-yard, he conquered the Prince almost instantly by the strength of a more resolute nature, and turned him out into the street, with all his fifty armed followers, with his flag and his eagle,‡ and his counterfeit headquarters Staff, as though he were dealing with a mere troop of strolling players.§ Yet only a few weeks afterwards this same Prince Louis Napoleon was able to show, by his demeanour

* This is his own explanation of his state given before the Chamber of Peers. The flutter he was in caused him, as he explained, to let his pistol go off without intending it, and to hit a soldier who was not taking part against him.—*Moniteur* for 1840, p. 2031-2034.

† Captain Col. Puygellier.

‡ The eagle here spoken of is the wooden one.

§ *Moniteur*, ubi ante.

before the Chamber of Peers, that where the occasion gave him leisure for thought, and for the exercise of mental control, he knew how to comport himself with dignity, and with a generous care for the safety and welfare of his followers.

It was natural that a man thus constituted should be much inclined to linger in the early stages of a plot; but since it chanced that by his birth and by his ambition Prince Louis Napoleon was put forward before the world as a pretender to the throne of France, he had always had around him a few keen adventurers who were willing to partake his fortunes; and if there were times when his personal wishes would have inclined him to choose repose or indefinite delay, he was too considerate in his feelings towards his little knot of followers to be capable of forgetting their needs.

His overtures to the gentlemen of France at the time when he was President.

In 1851, motives of this kind, joined with feelings of disappointment and of personal humiliation, were driving the President forward. He had always wished to bring about a change in the Constitution, but originally he had hoped to be able to do this with the aid and approval of some at least of the statesmen and eminent generals of the country; and the fact of his desiring such concurrence in his plans seems to show that he did not at first intend to trample upon France by subjecting her to a sheer Asiatic despotism, but rather to found such a monarchy as might have the support of men of station and character. But besides that few people believed him to be so able a man as he really was, there attached to him at

CHAP. XIV.

this period a good deal of ridicule. So, although there were numbers in France who would have been heartily glad to see the Republic crushed by some able dictator, there were hardly any public men who believed that in the President of the Republic they would find the man they wanted. Therefore his overtures to the gentlemen of France were always rejected. Every statesman to whom he applied refused to entertain his proposals. Every general whom he urged always said that for whatever he did he must have 'an order from the Minister of War.'

Is rebuffed, and falls into other hands.

The President being thus rebuffed, his plan of changing the form of government with the assent of some of the leading statesmen and generals of the country degenerated into schemes of a very different kind; and at length he fell into the hands of persons of the quality of Persigny, Morny, and Fleury. With these men he plotted; and, strangely enough, it happened that the character and the pressing wants of his associates gave strength and purpose to designs which, without this stimulus, might have long remained mere dreams. The President was easy and generous in the use of money, and he gave his followers all he could; but the checks created by the constitution of the Republic were so effective, that beyond the narrow limit allowed by law he was without any command of the State resources. In their inveterate love of strong government, the Republicans had placed within reach of the Chief of the State ample means for overthrowing their whole structure, and yet they allowed him to remain subject

Motives which pressed him forward.

to the same kind of anxiety, and to be driven to the same kind of expedients, as an embarrassed tradesman. This was the President's actual plight; and if he looked to the future as designed for him by the Constitution, he could see nothing but the prospect of having to step down on a day already fixed, and descend from a conspicuous station into poverty and darkness. He would have been content, perhaps, to get what he needed by fair means. In the beginning of the year he had tried hard to induce the Chambers to increase the funds placed at his disposal. He failed. From that moment it was to be expected that, even if he himself should still wish to keep his hands from the purse of France, his associates, becoming more and more impatient, and more and more practical in their views, would soon press their chief into action.

He declares for universal suffrage.

The President had been a promoter of the law of the 31st of May restricting the franchise, but he now became the champion of universal suffrage. To minds versed in politics this change might have sufficed to disclose the nature of the schemes upon which the Chief of the State was brooding; but from first to last, words tending to allay suspicion had been used with great industry and skill. From the moment of his coming before the public in February 1848, the Prince laid hold of almost every occasion he could find for vowing again and again that he harboured no schemes against the Constitution. The speech which he addressed to the Assembly

CHAP. XIV.

His solemn declarations of loyalty to the Republic.

in 1850* may be taken as one instance out of numbers of these solemn and volunteered declarations.† He 'considered,' he said, 'as great criminals, those who 'by personal ambition compromised the small amount 'of stability secured by the Constitution; . . . that if 'the Constitution contained defects and dangers, the 'Assembly was competent to expose them to the eyes 'of the country; but that he alone, bound by his 'oath, restrained himself within the strict limits traced 'by that act.' He declared that 'the first duty of au-'thorities was to inspire the people with respect for 'the law by never deviating from it themselves; and 'that his anxiety was not, he assured the Assembly, 'to know who would govern France in 1852, but to 'employ the time at his disposal, so that the transi-'tion, whatever it might be, should be effected without 'agitation or disturbance; for,' said he, 'the noblest 'object, and the most worthy of an exalted mind, is 'not to seek when in power how to perpetuate it, but 'to labour inseparably to fortify, for the benefit of all, 'those principles of authority and morality which defy 'the passions of mankind and the instability of laws.'

It was thus that, in language well contrived for winning belief, he repudiated as wicked and preposterous the notion of his being the man who would or could act against the Constitution; and supposing that when he voluntarily made these declarations he had resolved to do what he afterwards did, he would have been guilty of deceit more than

* 13th November.

† See an enumeration of a few of these given *ante*.

commonly black; but perhaps an appreciation of the room which he had in his mind for double and conflicting views, and a knowledge of his hesitating nature, and of the pressing wants of the associates by whom he was surrounded, may justify the more friendly view of those who imagine that, when he made all these solemn declarations, he was really shrinking from treason. Certainly, his words were just such as may have pictured the real thoughts of a goaded man at times when he had determined to make a stand against hungry and resolute followers who were keenly driving him forward.

It was natural that, in looking at the operation which changed the Republic into an Empire, the attention of the observer should be concentrated upon the person who, already the Chief of the State, was about to attain to the throne; and there seems to be no doubt that what may be called the literary part of the transaction was performed by the President in person. He was the lawyer of the confederacy. He no doubt wrote the Proclamations, the Plebiscites, and the Constitutions, and all suchlike things; but it seems that the propelling power which brought the plot to bear was mainly supplied by Count de Morny, and by a resolute Major named Fleury.

Morny.

M. Morny was a man of great daring, and gifted with more than common powers of fascination. He had been a member of the Chamber of Deputies in the time of the monarchy; but he was rather known to the world as a speculator than as a politician. He was a buyer and seller of those fractional and

CHAP. XIV.

volatile interests in trading adventures which go by the name of 'shares;' and since it has chanced that the nature of some of his transactions has been brought to light by the public tribunals, it is probable that the kind of repute in which he is held may be owing in part to those disclosures.* He knew how to found a 'company,' and he now undertook to establish institutions which were destined to be more lucrative to him than any of his former adventures. M. Morny was a practical man. If Prince Louis Napoleon was going to be content with a visionary life, thinking fondly of the hour when grateful France would come of her own accord and salute him Emperor, M. Morny was not the sort of person who would consent to stand loitering with him in the hungry land of dreams.

Fleury.

It seems, however, that the man who was the most able to make the President act, to drive him deep into his own plot, and fiercely carry him through it, was Major Fleury. Fleury was young, but his life had been checkered. He was the son of a Paris tradesman, from whom at an early age he had inherited a pleasant sum of money. He plunged into the enjoyments of Paris with so much ardour that that phase of his career was soon cut short; but whilst his father's friends were no doubt lamenting ten times a-day that the boy had 'eaten his fortune,' young Fleury was at the foot of a ladder which was

* The trials here referred to are the action for libel against M. Cabrol, Tribunal of the Seine, January 21 and June 30, 1853; and the suit instituted by the shareholders of the 'Constitutionnel' against Veron, Mirès, and Morny.

destined to give him a control over the fate of a mighty nation. He enlisted in the army as a common soldier; but the officers of his corps were so well pleased with the young man, and so admired the high spirit with which he met his change of fortune, that their goodwill soon caused him to be raised from the ranks. It was perhaps his knowledge about horses which first caused him to be attached to the Staff of the President. CHAP. XIV.

From his temperament and his experience of life it resulted that Fleury cared a great deal for money, or the things which money can buy, and was not at all disposed to stand still and go without it. He was daring and resolute, and his daring was of the kind which holds good in the moment of danger. If Prince Louis Bonaparte was bold and ingenious in designing, Fleury was the man to execute. The one was skilful in preparing the mine and laying the train; the other was the man standing by with a lighted match, and determined to touch the fuse. The support of such a comrade as Fleury in the barrack-yard at Strasburg or at Boulogne might have brought many lives into danger, but it would have prevented the enterprise from coming to a ridiculous end. In truth, the nature of the one man was the complement of the nature of the other; and between them they had a set of qualities so puissant for dealing a sudden blow, that, working together, and with all the appliances of the Executive Government at their command, they were a pair who might well be able to make a strange dream come true. It

CHAP. XIV.

would seem that from the moment when Fleury became a partaker of momentous secrets, the President ceased to be free. At all events, he would have found it costly to attempt to stand still.

Fleury searches in Algeria and finds St Arnaud.

The language held by the generals who declared that they would act under the authority of the Minister of War, and not without it, suggested the contrivance which was resorted to. Fleury determined to find a military man capable of command, capable of secrecy, and capable of a great venture. The person chosen was to be properly sounded, and, if he seemed willing, was to be admitted into the plot. He was then to be made Minister of War, in order that through him the whole of the land-forces should be at the disposal of the plotters. Fleury went to Algeria to find the instrument required; and he so well performed his task that he hit upon a general officer who was christened, it seems, Jacques Arnaud Le Roy, but was known at this time as Achille St Arnaud. Of some of the adventures of this person it will be right to speak hereafter.* There was nothing in his past life, nor in his then plight, which made it at all dangerous for Fleury to approach him with the words of a suborner. He readily entered into the plot. From the moment that Prince Louis Bonaparte and his associates had intrusted their secret to the man of Fleury's selection, it was perhaps hardly possible for them to flinch; for the exigencies of St Arnaud, formerly Le Roy, were not likely to be on so modest a scale as

St Arnaud is suborned and made Minister of War.

* In Volume II.

to consist with the financial arrangements of a Republic governed by law; and the discontent of a person of his quality, with a secret like that in his charge, would plainly bring the rest of the brethren into danger. He was made Minister of War. This was on the 27th of October. CHAP. XIV.

At the same time M. Maupas, or De Maupas, was brought into the Ministry. In the previous July this person had been Prefect of the Department of the Upper Garonne. Of him his friends say that he had property, and that he has never been used to obtain money dishonestly. His zeal had led him to desire that thirty-two persons, including three members of the Council-General, should be seized and thrown into prison on a charge of conspiring against the Government. The legal authorities of the department refused to suffer this, because they said there was no ground for the charge. Then this Maupas, or De Maupas, proposed that the want of all ground for accusing the men should be supplied by a stratagem, and with that view he deliberately offered to arrange that incriminating papers and arms and grenades should be secretly placed in the houses of the men whom he wanted to have accused. Naturally the legal authorities of the department were horror-struck by the proposal, and they denounced the Prefect to the Keeper of the Seals. Maupas was ordered to Paris.* From the indignant and scorn- Maupas.

* See the 'Bulletin Français,' p. 98 *et seq.* This publication appeared under auspices which make it a safe authority. It is to be regretted that its statements extend to only a portion of the events connected with the 2d of December.

CHAP. XIV.

ful presence of M. Faucher he came away sobbing, and people who knew the truth supposed him to be for ever disgraced and ruined ; but he went and told his sorrows to the President. The President of course instantly saw that the man could be suborned. He admitted him into the plot, and on the 27th of October appointed him Prefect of Police.

He is suborned and made Prefect of Police.

Persigny.

Persigny, properly Fialin, was in the plot. He was descended, on one side, of an ancient family, and, disliking his father's name, he seems to have called himself for many years after the name of his maternal grandfather.* He began life as a non-commissioned officer. As he himself said,† his instinct was 'to serve ;' and at first he served the Legitimists, but chance brought him into contact with Louis Bonaparte, and he very soon became the attached friend of the Prince, and his partner in all his plans and adventures. If Morny was merely taking up the Bonaparte cause as one of many other money speculations, Persigny could truly say that he had made it for years his profession, and had even tried as well as he could to raise it to the dignity of a real political principle. But the part intrusted to Persigny on this occasion, though possibly an important one, was not of a conspicuous sort. It is said that, the firmness of the Prince Louis Bonaparte being distrusted by his comrades, Persigny, who was of a sanguine, hopeful nature, was to remain constantly at the

* This, I think, was the account which he gave upon his trial in 1840. He was tried by the description of Fialin *dit* Persigny.

† Before the Chamber of Peers, 1840.

Elysée in order to receive the tidings which would be coming in during the period of danger, and prevent them from reaching the President in such a way as to shake him and cause despondency. At all events, it would seem that the hand of Persigny was not the hand employed to execute the measures of the Elysée; and to this circumstance he owes it that he will not always have to stand in the same sentences with Morny, and Fleury, and Maupas, and St Arnaud, formerly Le Roy.

Contrivance for paralysing the National Guard.

It was necessary to take measures for paralysing the National Guard; but the force was under the command of General Perrot, a man whose honesty could not be tampered with. To dismiss him suddenly would be to excite suspicion. The following expedient was adopted: The President appointed as Chief of the Staff of the National Guard a person named Vieyra. The past life and the then repute of this person were of such a kind, that General Perrot, it seems, conceived himself insulted by the nomination, and instantly resigned. That was what the brethren of the Elysée wanted. On Sunday the 30th General Lawæstine was appointed to the command. He was a man who had fought in the great wars, but, now in his grey hairs, he was not too proud to accept the part designed for him. His function was, not to lead the force of which he took the command, but to prevent it from acting. It was unnecessary to admit either Lawæstine or Vieyra to a complete knowledge of the plot, because all that they were to do was to frustrate the assembly of the

CHAP. XIV.

National Guard by withholding all orders and preventing the drums from beating to arms.

The army.

Of course the engine on which the brethren of the Elysée rested their main hopes was the army; and it was known that the remembrance of humiliating conflicts in the streets of Paris had long been embittering the temper in which the troops regarded the people of the capital. Moreover, it happened that at this time the Legislative Assembly had been agitated by a discussion which inflamed the troops with fresh anger against civilians in general, but more especially against the Parisians, against the representatives of the people, and against statesmen and politicians of all kinds. A portion of the Chambers, foreseeing that the army might be used against the freedom of the Legislative Body, had desired that the Assembly should avail itself of a provision in the Constitution which empowered it, not only to have an armed force for its protection, but to have that force under the order of its own nominee. This was a scheme which shocked the mind of the army. In France, of late years, the Minister of War had always been a soldier, and an order from him (though it was in reality the order of a member of the civil Government) was habitually regarded by military men as the order of a General having supreme command. A proposal to change this system by giving to the Assembly a direct control over a portion of the land-forces could be easily represented to the soldiery as a plan for withdrawing the French army from the control of its Gene-

Its indignation at M. Baze's proposal.

rals, and placing it under the command of men whom the soldiers called 'lawyers.' Seen in this light, the project so exasperated the feelings of the troops, that if it had been carried they would probably have been stirred up at once to effect by force a violent change of the Constitution. The measure was rejected; but anger is not always appeased by the removal of the kindling motive; and the soreness created by the mere agitation of the question had been so well kept up by the means employed for the purpose, that the garrison of Paris now came to look upon the people with a well-defined feeling of spite.

Selection of regiments and of officers for the Army of Paris.

Care had been taken to bring into Paris and its neighbourhood the regiments most likely to serve the purpose of the Elysée, and to give the command to generals who might be expected to act without scruples. The forces in Paris and its neighbourhood were under the orders of General Magnan. At the time of Louis Napoleon's descent upon the coast near Boulogne, Magnan had had the misfortune to be singled out by the Prince as a person to whom it was fitting to offer a bribe of £4000. He had also had the misfortune to be detected in continuing his intercourse with the officer who had thought it safe to come with a proposal like that into the presence of a French general. Magnan did not conceal his willingness to go all lengths, and the brethren, it appears, wished to bring him completely into the plot,* but his panegyrist (not seeing, perhaps, the full import of his disclosure) causes it

Magnan.

* This is inferred from what follows.

CHAP. XIV.

to be known that the General, though ready to act against Paris and against the Assembly, declined to risk his safety by avowedly joining in the plot. 'He 'expressly requested,' says Granier de Cassaignac, 'not to be apprised until the moment for taking the 'necessary dispositions and mounting on horseback.'* In other words, though he was willing to use the forces under his command in destroying the Constitution, and in effecting such slaughter as might be needed for the purpose, he refused to dispense with the screen afforded by an order from the Minister of War. In the event of the enterprise failing he would be able to say, 'I refused to participate in any 'plot. The duty of a soldier is obedience. Here 'is the order which I received from General St 'Arnaud. I did no more than obey my commanding 'officer.'

Meeting of twenty generals at Magnan's house.

On the 27th of November, however, this Magnan assembled twenty generals whom he had under his command, and gave them to understand that they might soon be called upon to act against Paris and against the Constitution. They promised a zealous and thoroughgoing obedience; and although every one of them, from Magnan downwards, was to have the pleasing shelter of an order from his superior officer, they all seem to have imagined that their determination was of the sort which mankind call heroic; for their panegyrist relates with pride that when Magnan and his twenty generals were entering into this league and covenant against the

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii.

people of Paris, they solemnly embraced one another.*

From time to time the common soldiery were gratified with presents of food and wine, as well as with an abundance of flattering words; and their exasperation against the civilians was so well kept alive, that men used to African warfare were brought into the humour for calling the Parisians 'Bedouins.' There was massacre in the very sound. The army of Paris was in the temper required.

The Army encouraged in its hatred of the people.

It was necessary for the plotters to have the concurrence of M. St Georges, the director of the State printing-office. M. St Georges was suborned. Then all was ready.

On the Monday night between the 1st and the 2d of December the President had his usual assembly at the Elysée. Ministers who were loyally ignorant of what was going on were mingled with those who were in the plot. Vieyra was present. He was spoken to by the President, and he undertook that the National Guard should not beat to arms that night. He went away, and it is said that he fulfilled his humble task by causing the drums to be mutilated. At the usual hour the assembly began to disperse, and by eleven o'clock there were only three guests who remained. These were Morny (who had previously taken care to show himself at one of the theatres), Maupas, and St Arnaud, formerly Le Roy. There was, besides, an orderly officer of the President, called Colonel Beville, who was initiated in the secret. Persigny, it

Assembly at the Elysée on Monday night.

Vieyra's errand.

Before midnight several of the confederates assemble in an inner room.

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii.

CHAP. XIV.

seems, was not present. Morny, Maupas, and St Arnaud went with the President into his cabinet; Colonel Beville followed them.* Mocquard, the private secretary of the President, was in the secret, but it does not appear that he was in the room at this time. Fleury too, it seems, was away; he was probably on an errand which tended to put an end to the hesitation of his more elderly comrades, and drive them to make the venture. They were to strike the blow that night. They deliberated, but in the absence of Fleury their council was incomplete, because at the very moment when perhaps their doubts and fears were inclining them still to hold back, Fleury, impetuous and resolute, might be taking a step which must needs push them forward. By-and-by they were apprised that an order which had been given for the movement of a battalion of gendarmerie had duly taken effect without exciting remark. It is probable that the execution of this delicate movement was the very business which Fleury had gone to witness with his own eyes, and that it was he who brought the intelligence of its complete success to the Elysée. Perhaps also he showed that, after the step which had just been taken, it would be dangerous to stop short, for the plotters now passed into action.

The President intrusts a packet to Colonel Beville.

The President intrusted a packet of manuscripts to Colonel Beville, and despatched him to the State printing-office.

It was in the streets which surround this building that the battalion of gendarmerie had been collected.

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii.

When Paris was hushed in sleep, the battalion came quietly out, and folded round the State printing-office. From that moment until their work was done the printers were all close captives, for no one of them was suffered to go out. For some time they were kept waiting. At length Colonel Beville came from the Elysée with his packet of manuscripts. These papers were the proclamations required for the early morning, and M. St Georges, the Director, gave orders to put them into type. It is said that there was something like resistance; but in the end, if not at first, the printers obeyed. Each compositor stood whilst he worked between two policemen, and the manuscript being cut into many pieces, no one could make out the sense of what he was printing.

Transaction at the State printing-office.

By these proclamations the President asserted that the Assembly was a hotbed of plots; declared it dissolved; pronounced for universal suffrage; proposed a new constitution; vowed anew that his duty was to maintain the Republic; and placed Paris and the twelve surrounding departments under martial law. In one of the proclamations he appealed to the army, and strove to whet its enmity against civilians by reminding it of the defeats inflicted upon the troops in 1830 and 1848.*

Tenor of the Proclamations.

The President wrote letters dismissing the members of the Government who were not in the plot;

Letters dismissing Ministers not in the plot.

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii. See also the *Annuaire* for 1851. This last publication (which must be distinguished from the *Annuaire des Deux Mondes*) gives an account of the events of December, written in a spirit favourable to the Elysée; but the Appendix contains a full collection of official documents.

CHAP. XIV.

but he did not cause these letters to be delivered until the following morning. He also signed a paper appointing Morny to the Home Office.

Hesitation at the Elysée.

The night was advancing. Some important steps had been taken, but still, though highly dangerous, it was not absolutely impossible for the plotters to stop short. They could tear up the letters which purported to dismiss the Ministers, and although they could not hope to prevent the disclosures which the printers would make as soon as they were released from captivity, it was not too late to keep back the words, and even the general tenor, of the Proclamations. But the next steps were of such a kind as to be irrevocable.

Fleury drags them on.

It is said that at this part of the night the spirit of some of the brethren was cast down, and that there was one of them who shrank from farther action; but Fleury, they say, got into a room alone with the man who wanted to hang back, and then, locking the door and drawing a pistol, stood and threatened his agitated friend with instant death if he still refused to go on.*

At three o'clock the order from the Minister of War is in the hands of Magnan.

What is certain is, that, whether in hope or whether in fear, the plotters went on with their midnight task. The order from the Minister of War was probably signed by half-past two in the morning, for at three it was in the hands of Magnan.†

* I have thought it right to introduce this account under a form indicating that it is based on mere rumour, but I entertain no doubt that the incident has been declared to be true by one of the two persons who stood face to face in that room.

† Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii.

CHAP. XIV.

Maupas's arrangements for the intended arrests.

At the same hour Maupas (assigning for pretext the expected arrival of foreign refugees) caused a number of Commissaries to be summoned in all haste to the Prefecture of Police. At half-past three in the morning these men were in attendance; Maupas received each of them separately, and gave to each distinct instructions. It was then that for the first time the main secret of the confederates passed into the hands of a number of subordinate agents. During some hours of that night every one of those humble Commissaries had the destinies of France in his hands; for he might either obey the Minister, and so place his country in the power of the Elysée; or he might obey the law, denounce the plot, and bring its contrivers to trial. Maupas gave orders for the seizure at the same minute of the foremost Generals of France, and several of her leading Statesmen. Parties of the police, each under the orders of a Commissary, were to be at the doors of the persons to be arrested some time beforehand, but the seizures were not to take place until a quarter past six.*

Disposition of the troops.

At six o'clock a brigade of infantry, under Forey, occupied the Quai d'Orsay; another brigade, under Dulac, occupied the garden of the Tuileries; another brigade, under Cotte, occupied the Place de la Concorde; and another brigade of infantry, under Canrobert, with a whole division of cavalry under Korte, and another brigade of cavalry under Reybell, was posted in the neighbourhood of the Elysée.† It would seem that the main objects aimed at by

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii. † Ibid.

CHAP. XIV.

those who thus placed the troops were, not at this moment to overawe the whole of Paris, but rather to support the operations of Maupas, and to provide for the safety of the brethren at the Elysée by keeping them close under the shield of the army as long as they remained in Paris, and, if such a step should become necessary, by securing and covering their flight.

Almost at the same time Maupas's orders were carefully obeyed; for at the appointed minute, and whilst it was still dark, the designated houses were entered. The most famous generals of France were seized. General Changarnier, General Bedeau, General Lamoricière, General Cavaignac, and General Leflô were taken from their beds, and carried away through the sleeping city and thrown into prison.* In the same minute the like was done with some of the chief members and officers of the Assembly, and, amongst others, with Thiers, Miot, Baze, Colonel Charras, Roger du Nord; and several of the democratic leaders. Some men, believed to be the chiefs of secret societies, were also seized.† The general object of these night-arrests was that, when morning broke, the army should be without generals inclined to observe the law, that the Assembly should be without the machinery for convoking it, and that all the political parties in the State should be paralysed by the disappearance of their chiefs. The number of men thus seized in the dark was seventy-eight. Eighteen of these were members of the Assembly.‡

The arrests of the principal Generals and of prominent Statesmen.

Whilst it was still dark, Morny, escorted by a body

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

of infantry, took possession of the Home Office, and prepared to touch the springs of that wondrous machinery by which a clerk can dictate to a nation. Already he began to tell forty thousand communes of the enthusiasm with which the sleeping city had received the announcement of measures not hitherto disclosed.

Morny takes possession of the Home Office, and begins to use its power.

When the light of the morning dawned, people saw the Proclamations on the walls, and slowly came to hear that numbers of the foremost men of France had been seized in the night-time, and that every General to whom the friends of law and order could look for help was lying in one or other of the prisons. The newspapers, to which a man might run in order to know, and know truly, what others thought and intended, were all seized and stopped.

Newspapers seized and stopped.

The gates of the Assembly were closed and guarded, but the Deputies, who began to flock thither, found means to enter by passing through one of the official residences which formed part of the building. They had assembled in the Chamber in large numbers; and some of them having caught Dupin, their reluctant President, were forcing him to come and take the chair, when a body of infantry burst in and drove them out, striking some of them with the butt-ends of their muskets. Almost at the same time a number of Deputies who had gathered about the side-entrance of the Assembly were roughly handled and dispersed by a body of light infantry. Twelve Deputies were seized by the soldiers, and carried off prisoners.*

Meeting of the Assembly.

It is dispersed by troops.

* La Vérité, 'Recueil d'Actes Officielles.'

CHAP. XIV.

The President's ride.

In the course of the morning the President, accompanied by his uncle, Jerome Bonaparte, and Count Flahault,* and attended by many general officers and a numerous staff, rode through some of the streets of Paris. It would seem that his theatric bent had led Prince Louis to expect from this ride a kind of triumph, upon which his fortunes would hinge; and certainly the unpopularity of the Assembly, and the suddenness and perfection of the blow which he had struck in the night, gave him fair grounds for his hope; but he was hardly aware of the light in which his personal pretensions were regarded by the keen laughing people of Paris. The moment when they would cease to use laughter against him was very near, but it had not yet come. Moreover, he did not bring himself to incur the risk which was necessary for obtaining an acclaim of the people, for he clung to the streets and the quays which were close under the dominion of the troops. Upon the whole, the reception he met with seems to have been neither friendly nor violently hostile, but chilling, and in a quiet way scornful.

It seems that after meeting this check his spirit suffered collapse. Once again, though not so hopelessly as at Strasburg and Boulogne, he had encountered the shock of the real world. And again, as before, the shock felled him. Nor was it strange that he should be abashed and desponding: obeying his old propensity, he had prepared and appointed for the

* I imagine that, before the night of the 1st of December, Count Flahault had some knowledge of what was going to be done.

Austerlitz day a great scenic greeting between himself on the one hand, and on the other a mighty nation. When, leaving the room where all this had been contrived and rehearsed, he came out into the free air, and rode through street after street, it became every minute more certain that Paris was too busy, too grave, too scornful to think of hailing him Emperor; nay, strange to say, the people, being fastidious or careless, or imperfectly aware of what had been done, refused to give him even that wondering attention which seemed to be insured to him by the transactions of the foregoing night; and yet, there they were—the proffered Cæsar and his long-prepared group of Captains — sitting published on the backs of real horses, with appropriate swords and dresses. Perhaps what a man in this plight might the most hate would be the sun—the cold December sun. Prince Louis rode home, and went in out of sight.

Seclusion and gloom of Prince Louis.

Thenceforth, for the most part, he remained close shut up in the Elysée. There, in an inner room, still decked in red trousers, but with his back to the daylight, they say he sat bent over a fireplace for hours and hours together, resting his elbows on his knees, and burying his face in his hands.

Measures for sheltering him from alarming messengers.

What is better known is, that in general, during this period of danger, tidings were not suffered to go to him straight. It seems that, either in obedience to his own dismal instinct, or else because his associates had determined to prevent him from ruining them by his gloom, he was kept sheltered from imme-

CHAP. XIV.

diate contact with alarming messengers. It was thought more wholesome for him to hear what Persigny or the resolute Fleury might think it safe to tell him, than to see with his own eyes an aide-de-camp fresh come from St Arnaud or Magnan, or a commissary full fraught with the sensations which were shaking the health of Maupas.

Meeting of the Assembly in another building.

Driven from their Chamber, the Deputies assembled at the Mayoralty of the 10th arrondissement. There, upon the motion of the illustrious Berryer, they resolved that the act of Louis Bonaparte was a forfeiture of the Presidency, and they directed the judges of the Supreme Court to meet and proceed to the judgment of the President and his accomplices.

Its decrees.

These resolutions had just been voted, when a battalion of the Chasseurs de Vincennes entered the

Troops ascend the stairs, but hesitate to use force.

courtyard of the Mayoralty, and began to ascend the stairs. One of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly went out and summoned the soldiers to stop, and leave the Chamber free. The officer appealed to felt the hatefulness or the danger of the duty intrusted to him, and, declaring that he was only an instrument, he said he would refer for guidance to his chief.*

Presently afterwards several battalions of the line under the command of General Forey came up and surrounded the Mayoralty. The Chasseurs de Vincennes were ordered to load. By-and-by two Commissaries of Police came to the door, and, announcing that they had orders to clear the hall, entreated the Assembly to yield. The Assembly refused. A third

* La Vérité, 'Recueil d'Actes Officielles.'

Commissary came, using more imperative language, but he also seems to have shrunk back when he was made to see the lawlessness of the act which he was attempting. At length an Aide-de-camp of General Magnan came with a written order directing the officer in command of the battalion to clear the hall, to do this if necessary by force, and to carry off to the prison of Mazas any Deputies offering resistance. By his way of framing this order, Magnan showed how he crouched under his favourite shelter, for in it he declared that he acted 'in consequence of the 'orders of the Minister of War.'* The number of Deputies present at this moment was two hundred and twenty. The whole Assembly declared that they resisted, and would yield to nothing short of force. In the absence of Dupin, M. Benoist d'Azy had been presiding over the Assembly, and both he and one of the Vice-Presidents were now collared by officers of police and led out. The whole Assembly followed, and, enfolded between files of soldiery, was marched through the streets. General Forey rode by the side of the column. The captive Assembly passed through the Rue de Grenelle, the Rue St Guillaume, the Rue Neuve de l'Université, the Rue de Beaune, and finally into the Quai d'Orsay. The spectacle of France thus marched prisoner through the streets seems to have pained the people who saw it, but the pain was that of men who, witnessing by chance some disagreeable outrage, feel sorry that some one else does not prevent it, and then pass on. The members of the Assembly,

Written orders from Magnan to clear the hall.

The Assembly refuses to yield except to force.

The whole Assembly taken prisoners by the troops and marched to the Quai d'Orsay.

* La Vérité, 'Recueil d'Actes Officielles.'

CHAP. XIV.

trusting too much to mere law and right, had neglected or failed to provide that there should be a great concourse of people in the neighbourhood of the hall where they met. Those who saw this ending of free institutions were casual bystanders, and were gathered, it seems, in no great numbers. There was no storm of indignation. In an evil hour the Republicans had made it a law that the representatives of the people should be paid for their services. This provision, as was natural, had brought the Assembly into discredit, for it destroyed the ennobling sentiment with which a free people is accustomed to regard its Parliament. The Paris workman, brave and warlike, but shrewd and somewhat envious, compared the amount of his day's earning with the wages of the Deputies, and it did not seem to him that the right cause to stand up for was the cause of men who were hired to be patriots at the rate of twenty-five francs a-day. Still, by his mere taste, and his high sense of the difference between what is becoming and what is ignoble, he was inclined to feel hurt by the sight of what he witnessed. In this doubtful temper the Paris workman stood watching, and saw his country slide down from out of the rank of free States. The gates of the D'Orsay barrack were opened, and the Assembly was marched into the court. Then the gates closed upon them.*

The Assembly imprisoned in the D'Orsay barrack.

It was now only two o'clock in the afternoon; but darkness was wanted to hide the thing which was next to be done, and the members of the Assembly

* La Vérité, 'Recueil d'Actes Officielles.'

were kept prisoners all the day in the barrack. At half-past four, three Deputies who had been absent came to the barrack and caused themselves to be made prisoners with the two hundred and twenty already there; and at half-past eight in the evening the twelve Deputies who had been seized by the troops at the house of the Assembly were brought to the barrack, so that the number of Deputies there imprisoned was now raised to two hundred and thirty-two.

At a quarter before ten o'clock at night a large number of the windowless vans which are used for the transport of felons were brought into the court of the barrack, and into these the two hundred and thirty-two members of the Assembly were thrust. They were carried off,—some to the Fort of Mount Valerian, some to the fortress of Vincennes, and some to the prison of Mazas. Before the dawn of the 3d of December all the eminent members of the Assembly, and all the foremost generals of France, were lying in prison; for now (besides General Changarnier, and General Bedeau, General Lamoricière, General Cavaignac, and General Leflô, and besides Thiers, and Colonel Charras, and Roger du Nord, and Miot, and Baze, and the others who had been seized the night before, and were still held fast in the jails) there were in prison two hundred and thirty-two of the representatives of the people, including, amongst others of wide renown, Berryer, Odillon Barrot, Barthêlemy St Hilaire, Gustave de Beaumont, Benoist d'Azy, the Duc de

The members of the Assembly carried off to different prisons in felons' vans.

The quality of the men imprisoned.

CHAP. XIV.

Broglie, Admiral Cecile, Chambolle, De Corcelles, Dufaure, Duvergier de Hauranne, De Falloux, General Lauriston, Oscar Lafayette, Lanjuinais, Lasteyrie, the Duc de Luines, the Duc de Montebello, General Radoult-Lafosse, General Oudinot, De Remusat, and the wise and gifted De Tocqueville. Amongst the men imprisoned there were twelve Statesmen who had been Cabinet Ministers, and nine of these had been chosen by the President himself.*

Quality of the men who imprisoned them.

These were the sort of men who were within the walls of the prisons. Those who threw them into prison were Prince Louis Bonaparte, Morny, Maupas, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy, all acting with the advice and consent of Fialin de Persigny, and under the propulsion of Fleury. It is true that the army was aiding, but it has been seen that Magnan, who commanded it, had taken care to screen himself under the orders of the Minister of War; and in the event of his being brought to trial he would, no doubt, labour to show that in doing as he did, and in effecting the midnight seizure and imprisonment of his country's greatest commanders, he was an instrument, and not a contriver.

Sitting of the Supreme Court.

By the laws of the Republic, the duty of taking cognisance of offences against the Constitution was cast upon the Supreme Court. The Court was sitting, when an armed force entered the hall, and the judges were driven from the bench, but not until

* The facts mentioned in the above paragraph are not, I believe, controverted in any important point; but the most authoritative and succinct account of what passed will be found in the well-known letter of M. de Tocqueville.

they had made a judicial order for the impeachment of the President. Before the Judges were thrust down they adjourned the Court to a day 'to be named 'hereafter,' and they had the spirit to order a notice of the impeachment to be served upon the President at the Elysée.* If the process-server encountered Colonel Fleury at the Elysée, he would soon find that Fleury was not the man who would suffer his gloomy master to be depressed by the sight of a man with an ugly summons from a Court of Law.

The Judges forcibly driven from the bench.

The ancient courage of the Parisians had accustomed them to the thought of encountering wrong by an armed resistance; but there were many causes which rendered it unwise for them at that moment to appeal to force. The events of 1848, and the doctrines of the sect called Socialists, had filled men's minds with terror. People who had known what it was to be for months and months together in actual fear for their lives and for their goods, were brought down into a condition of mind which made them willing to side with any executive government however lawless, against any kind of insurrection however righteous. Moreover, the feeling of contempt with which the President had been regarded by many was not immediately changed by the events of the 2d of December. It was effectually changed, as will be seen, by the carnage of the 4th; but before the afternoon of that day, the very extravagance of the outrage which had been perpetrated so reminded men of the invasion of Strasburg and the grotesque

Circumstances which rendered it imprudent to resort to insurrection fo the defence of the laws.

* 'Bulletin Français.'

CHAP. XIV.

descent upon Boulogne, that, during the fifty-four hours which followed upon the dawn of the 2d, the indignation of the public was weakened by its sense of the ridiculous. The contemptuous cry of 'Soulouque!' indicated that Paris was comparing Louis Napoleon to the negro Emperor who had travestied the achievements of the First Bonaparte; and there were many to whom it seemed that his mimicry of the 18th Brumaire belonged to exactly the same class of enterprises as his mimicry of the return from Elba. Plainly the difference was, that this time, instead of having only a few dresses and counterfeit flags, he commanded the resources of the most powerful executive government in the world; but still there was a somewhat widespread belief that the President was tumbling as fast as was necessary, and would soon be defeated and punished. Besides, by the contrivance already described, the plotters had paralysed the National Guard. Moreover, it would seem that the great body of the working-men did not conceive themselves to be hurt by what had been done. Universal suffrage, and the immediate privilege of choosing a dictator for France, were offerings well fitted to win over many honest though credulous labourers, and the baser sort, whose vice is envy, were gratified by what had been done; for they loved to see the kind of inversion which was implied in the fact that men like Lamoricière, and Bedeau, and Cavaignac, like De Luines, like De Tocqueville, and the Duc de Broglie, could be shut up in a jail or thrown into

a felon's van by persons like Morny, and Maupas, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy. Thus there was no sufficing material for the immediate formation of insurgent forces in Paris. The rich and the middle classes were indignant, but they had a horror of insurrection; and the poor had less dread of insurrection, but then they were not indignant. It is known, moreover, that for the moment there was no fighting power in Paris. Paris has generally abounded in warlike and daring men, who love fighting for fighting's sake; but, for the time, this portion of the French community had been crushed by the result of the great street-battle of June 1848, and the seizures and banishments which followed the defeat of the insurgents. The men of the barricades had been stripped of their arms, deprived of their leaders, and so thinned in numbers as to be unequal to any serious conflict, and their helplessness was completed by the sudden disappearance of the street captains and the chiefs of secret societies, who had been seized in the night between the 1st and 2d of December.

The Committee of Resistance.

Still there was a remnant of the old insurrectionary forces which was willing to try the experiment of throwing up a few barricades, and there was, besides, a small number of men who were impelled in the same direction by motives of a different and almost opposite kind. These last were men too brave, too proud, too faithful in their love of right and freedom, to be capable of acquiescing for even a week in the transactions of the December night. The foremost

CHAP. XIV.

of these was the illustrious Victor Hugo. He and some of the other members of the Assembly who had escaped seizure, formed themselves into a Committee of Resistance, with a view to assert by arms the supremacy of the law. This step they took on the 2d of December.

Attempted rising in the Faubourg St Antoine.

Several members of the Assembly went into the Faubourg St Antoine, and strove to raise the people. These deputies were Schœlcher, Baudin, Aubry, Duval, Chaix, Malardier, and De Flotte, and they were vigorously supported by Cournet, whose residence beaome their headquarters, and by Xavier Durrieu, Kesler, Ruin, Lemaitre, Wabripon, Le Jeune, and other men connected with the democratic press. More, it would seem, by their personal energy than by the aid of the people, these men threw up a slight barricade at the corner of the Rue St Marguerite. Against this there marched a battalion of the 19th Regiment; and then there occurred a scene which may make one smile for a moment, and may then almost force one to admire the touching pedantry of brave men, who imagined that, without policy or warlike means, they could be strong with the mere strength of the law. Laying aside their fire-arms, and throwing across their shoulders scarfs which marked them as Representatives of the People, the Deputies ranged themselves in front of the barricade, and one of them, Charles Baudin, held ready in his hand the book of the Constitution. When the head of the column was within a few yards of the barricade, it was halted. For some moments there was silence.

The barricade of the Rue St Marguerite.

Law and Force had met. On the one side was the Code democratic, which France had declared to be perpetual; on the other a battalion of the line. Charles Baudin, pointing to his book, began to show what he held to be the clear duty of the battalion; but the whole basis of his argument was an assumption that the law ought to be obeyed; and it seems that the officer in command refused to concede what logicians call the 'major premiss,' for, instead of accepting its necessary consequence, he gave an impatient sign. Suddenly the muskets of the front-rank men came down, came up, came level; and in another instant their fire pelted straight into the group of the scarfed Deputies. Baudin fell dead, his head being shattered by more than one ball. One other was killed by the volley; several more were wounded. The book of the Constitution had fallen to the ground, and the defenders of the law recurred to their fire-arms. They shot the officer who had caused the death of their comrade and questioned their major premiss. There was a fight of the Homeric sort for the body of Charles Baudin. The battalion won it. Four soldiers carried it off.* Plainly this attempted insurrection in the Faubourg St Antoine was without the support of the multitude. It died out. CHAP. XIV.

Barricades in central Paris.

The Committee of Resistance now caused barricades to be thrown up in that mass of streets between the Hôtel de Ville and the Boulevard, which is the accustomed centre of an insurrection in Paris; but

* Xavier Durrieu, pp. 23, 24.

CHAP. XIV.

they were not strong enough to occupy the houses, and therefore the troops passed through the streets without danger, and easily took every barricade which they encountered. When the troops retired the barricades again sprang up, but only to be again taken. This state of things continued during part of the 3d of December; but afterwards the efforts of the troops were relaxed, and, during the night and the whole forenoon of the next day, the formation of barricades in the centre of Paris was allowed to go on without encountering serious interruption.*

State of Paris at two o'clock on the 4th of Dec.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 4th, the condition of Paris was this:—The mass of streets which lies between the Boulevard and the neighbourhood of the Hôtel de Ville was barricaded, and held without combating by the insurgents; but the rest of the city was free from grave disturbance. The army was impending. It was nearly forty-eight thousand strong,† and comprised a force of all arms, including cavalry, infantry, artillery, engineers, and gendarmes. Large bodies of infantry were so posted that brigades advancing from all the quarters of the compass could simultaneously converge upon the barricaded district. Besides that, by the means already shown, the troops had been wrought into a feeling of hatred against the people of Paris, they had clearly been made to understand that they were to allow no consideration for bystanders to interfere with their fire, that they were to give no quarter, and that they were to put to death not only the combatants whom

Attitude of the troops.

* Magnan's Despatch, 'Moniteur.' † 47,928.

they might see in arms against them, but those also who, without having been seen in the act, might nevertheless be deemed to have taken part against them. When it is remembered that the duty—the judicial duty—of bringing people within this last category was cast upon raging soldiers, it will be clear that the army of Paris was brought into the streets with instructions well fitted to bring about the events which marked the afternoon of the 4th of December.* For reasons which then remained unknown, the troops were abstaining from action, and there was a good distance between the heads of the columns and the outposts of the insurgents.

Hesitation of Magnan.

It is plain that, either because of his own hesitation, or because of the hesitation of the President or M. St Arnaud, the General in command of the army was hanging back; † and in truth, though the mere physical task which he had to perform was a slight one, Magnan could not but see that, politically, he had got into danger. The mechanical arrangements of the night of the 2d of December had met with a success which was wondrously complete; but in other respects the enterprise of the Elysian brethren

* My knowledge as to what the troops were made to understand is derived from a source highly favourable to the Elysée.

† Magnan, in his Despatch, accounts for his delay in words which tend to justify the conclusion of those who believe that the opportunity of inflicting slaughter on the people of Paris was deliberately sought for and prepared; but I am not inclined to believe that for such an object a French general would throw away the first seven hours of a short December day, and therefore, so far as concerns his motives, I reject Magnan's statement. I consider that the disclosures made before the Chamber of Peers, in 1840, give me a right to use my own judgment in determining the weight which is due to this person's assertions.

CHAP. XIV.

seemed to be failing, for no one of mark and character had come forward to abet the President. There were many lovers of order and tranquillity who wished the President to succeed in overthrowing the Constitution, or giving it the needful wrench; but they had assumed that he would not engage in any enterprise of this sort without the support of some, at least, of the Statesmen who were the known champions of the cause of order. Those whose views had lain in this direction were shocked out of their hopes when, on the 2d of December, they came to find that all the honoured defenders of the cause of order had been thrown into prison, and that the persons who were sheltering the President by their concurrence and their moral sanction, were Morny, and Maupas or De Maupas, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy. The list of the Ministry, which was published on the following day, contained no name held in honour; and the plotters of the Elysée, terrified, as it seems, at the state of isolation in which they were placed, resorted to a curious stratagem. They formed what they called a 'Consultative Commission,' and promulgated a decree which purported to appoint as members of the body, not only most of the plotters themselves, and others whose services they could command, but also some eighty other men who were eminent for their character and station.* In so far as it represented these eighty men to be members of the Commission, the decree was a counterfeit. One after another, the men with the honoured names

Its probable grounds.

Apparent terror of the plotters on account of their continued isolation.

Stratagem of forming the 'Consultative Commission.'

* 'Annuaire,' Appendix.

repudiated the notion that they had consented to go and 'consult' with Louis Bonaparte, and Morny, and Fleury, and Maupas, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy.* The Elysée derived great advantage from this stratagem, because for many precious hours, and even days, it kept the country from knowing what was the number and what was the quality of the persons who were really abetting the President; but Magnan of course knew the truth, and when he found, on the morning of the 4th of December, that even the complete success of all the arrangements of the foregoing Tuesday had not been hitherto puissant enough to bring to the Elysée the support of men of weight and character, he had grounds for the alarm which seems to have been the cause of his inaction.

For, regarded in connection with the state of isolation in which the plotters still remained, the insurrection, feeble as it was, became a source of grave danger to the General in command of the troops. It would have been no new thing to have to act against insurgents in vindication of the law, and under the orders of what had been commonly called a 'Government;' but this time the law was on the side of the insurgents, and the knot of men who had got the control of the offices of the State were not so circumstanced in point of repute as to be able to make up for the want of legal authority by the weight of their personal character. Therefore it was

* Their letters to this effect appeared from time to time in the English journals.

CHAP. XIV.

natural for Magnan, notwithstanding his cherished order from the Minister of War, to think a good deal of what might happen to him, if perchance, at the very moment when he was taking upon his hands the blood of the Parisians, the plot of which he was the instrument should after all break down for want of support from men known and honoured as Statesmen.

Magnan at length resolves to act.

But at length perhaps it was effectually explained to Magnan that he must stand or fall with those to whom he was now committed, and that, although he thought to keep himself under the shelter of the 'order of the Minister of War,' the testimony of any one out of the twenty Generals who met him on the 27th of November would suffice to bring him into nearly the same plight as any of the avowed plotters. A judicious application of this kind of torture would make it unnecessary for Colonel Fleury to show even the hilt of his pistol. At all events, Magnan now at last consented to act against the insurrection. He had thrown away the whole of the morning and the better part of the afternoon, and this on a short December day; but at two o'clock the troops were ordered to advance, and by three all the heads of columns which were converging upon the insurrection from different points were almost close to the several barricades upon which they had marched.

Point of contact between the ground occupied by the

The advance-post of the insurgents, at its north-western extremity, was covered by a small barricade, which crossed the Boulevard at a point close to the Gymnase Theatre. Some twenty men, with weapons

and a drum taken in part from the 'property room' of the theatre, were behind this rampart; and a small flag, which the insurgents had chanced to find, was planted on the top of the barricade.*

troops and that occupied by the insurgents.

Facing this little barricade, at a distance of about a hundred and fifty yards, was the head of the vast column of troops which now occupied the whole of the western Boulevard, and a couple of field-pieces stood pointed towards the barricade. In the neutral space between the barricade and the head of the column the shops and almost all the windows were closed, but numbers of spectators, including many women, crowded the foot-pavement. These gazers were obviously incurring the risk of receiving stray shots. But westward of the point occupied by the head of the column the state of the Boulevards was different. From that point home to the Madeleine the whole carriage-way was occupied by troops; the infantry was drawn up in subdivisions at quarter distance. Along this part of the gay and glittering Boulevard the windows, the balconies, and the foot-pavements were crowded with men and women who were gazing at the military display. These gazers had no reason for supposing that they incurred any danger, for they could see no one with whom the army would have to contend. It is true that notices had been placed upon the walls, recommending people

State of the Boulevard at three o'clock.

* The great barricade in this district was the one which crossed the Boulevard diagonally, near the Porte St Denis. It is not noticed in the text, because the object here is, not to describe in detail the preparations of the insurgents, but merely to show the state of the Boulevard at the point where their advanced post faced the troops.

CHAP. XIV.

not to encumber the streets, and warning them that they would be liable to be dispersed by the troops without being summoned; but of course those who had chanced to see this announcement naturally imagined that it was a menace addressed to riotous crowds which might be pressing upon the troops in a hostile way. Not one man could have read it as a sentence of sudden death against peaceful spectators.

At three o'clock one of the field-pieces ranged in front of the column was fired at the little barricade near the Gymnase. The shot went high over the mark. The troops at the head of the column sent a few musket-shots in the direction of the barricade, and there was a slight attempt at reply, but no one on either side was wounded; and the engagement, if so it could be called, was so languid and harmless that even the gazers who stood on the foot-pavement, between the troops and the barricade, were not deterred from remaining where they were; and with regard to the spectators further west, there was nothing that tended to cause them alarm, for they could see no one who was in antagonism with the troops. So along the whole Boulevard, from the Madeleine to near the Rue du Sentier, the foot-pavements, the windows, and the balconies still remained crowded with men and women and children, and from near the Rue du Sentier to the little barricade at the Gymnase, spectators still lined the foot-pavement; but in that last part of the Boulevard the windows were closed.*

* What I say as to the state of the Boulevard at this time is taken

CHAP. XIV.

The massacre of the Boulevard.

According to some, a shot was fired from a window or a house-top near the Rue du Sentier. This is denied by others, and one witness declares that the first shot came from a soldier near the centre of one of the battalions, who fired straight up into the air; but what followed was this: the troops at the head of the column faced about to the south and opened fire. Some of the soldiery fired point-blank into the mass of spectators who stood gazing upon them from the foot-pavement, and the rest of the troops fired up at the gay crowded windows and balconies.* The officers in general did not order the firing, but seemingly they were agitated in the same way as the men of the rank and file, for such of them as could be seen from a balcony at the corner of the Rue Montmartre appeared to acquiesce in all that the soldiery did.†

The impulse which had thus come upon the soldiery near the head of the column was a motive akin to panic, for it was carried by swift contagion from man to man till it ran westward from the Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle into the Boulevard Poissonière, and gained the Boulevard Montmartre, and ran swiftly through its whole length, and entered the Boulevard des Italiens. Thus by a movement in the nature of that which tacticians describe as 'conversion,' a column of some sixteen thousand men facing eastward

from many concurrent authorities, but Captain Jesse's statement (see *post*) is the most clear and satisfactory so far as concerns what he saw.

* Captain Jesse, *ubi post.*

† Ibid.

CHAP. XIV.

towards St Denis was suddenly formed, as it were, into an order of battle fronting southward, and busily firing into the crowd which lined the foot-pavement, and upon the men, women, and children who stood at the balconies and windows on that side of the Boulevard.* What made the fire at the houses the more deadly was that, even after it had begun at the eastern part of the Boulevard Montmartre, people standing at the balconies and windows farther west could not see or believe that the troops were really firing in at the windows with ball-cartridge, and they remained in the front-rooms, and even continued standing at the windows, until a volley came crashing in. At one of the windows there stood a young Russian noble with his sister at his side. Suddenly they received the fire of the soldiery, and both of them were wounded with musket-shots. An English surgeon, who had been gazing from another window in the same house, had the fortune to stand unscathed; and when he began to give his care to the wounded brother and sister, he was so touched, he says, by their forgetfulness of self, and the love they seemed to bear the one for the other, that more than ever before in all his life he prized his power of warding off death.

Of the people on the foot-pavement who were not struck down at first, some rushed and strove to find a shelter, or even a half-shelter, at any spot within reach. Others tried to crawl away on their hands and knees; for they hoped that perhaps the balls

* Captain Jesse, *ubi post.*

might fly over them. The impulse to shoot people had been sudden, but was not momentary. The soldiers loaded and reloaded with a strange industry, and made haste to kill and kill, as though their lives depended upon the quantity of the slaughter they could get through in some given period of time. CHAP. XIV.

When there was no longer a crowd to fire into, the soldiers would aim carefully at any single fugitive who was trying to effect his escape, and if a man tried to save himself by coming close up to the troops, and asking for mercy, the soldiers would force or persuade the suppliant to keep off, and hasten away, and then, if they could, they killed him running. This slaughter of unarmed men and women was continued for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. It chanced that amongst the persons standing at the balconies near the corner of the Rue Montmartre there was an English officer; and because of the position in which he stood, the professional knowledge which guided his observation, the composure with which he was able to see and to describe, and the more than common responsibility which attaches upon a military narrator; it is probable that his testimony will be always appealed to by historians who shall seek to give a truthful account of the founding of the Second French Empire.

At the moment when the firing began, this officer was looking upon the military display with his wife at his side; and was so placed that if he looked eastward he could carry his eye along the Boulevard for a distance of about 800 yards, and

CHAP. XIV.

see as far as the head of the column; and if he looked westward he could see to the point where the Boulevard Montmartre runs into the Boulevard des Italiens. This is what he writes: 'I went to the balcony 'at which my wife was standing, and remained there 'watching the troops. The whole Boulevard, as far 'as the eye could reach, was crowded with them, '—principally infantry in subdivisions at quarter 'distance, with here and there a batch of twelve-'pounders and howitzers, some of which occupied 'the rising ground of the Boulevard Poissonière. 'The officers were smoking their cigars. The win-'dows were crowded with people, principally women, 'tradesmen, servants, and children, or, like ourselves, 'the occupants of apartments. Suddenly, as I was 'intently looking with my glass at the troops in 'the distance eastward, a few musket-shots were 'fired at the head of the column, which consisted 'of about 3000 men. In a few moments it spread; 'and, after hanging a little, came down the Boulevard 'in a waving sheet of flame. So regular, however, 'was the fire that at first I thought it was a feu de 'joie for some barricade taken in advance, or to signal 'their position to some other division; and it was 'not till it came within fifty yards of me, that I re-'cognised the sharp ringing report of ball-cartridge; 'but even then I could scarcely believe the evidence 'of my ears, for, as to my eyes, I could not discover 'any enemy to fire at; and I continued looking at 'the men until the company below me were actually 'raising their firelocks, and one vagabond sharper

'than the rest—a mere lad without whisker or mous-
'tache—had covered me. In an instant I dashed my
'wife, who had just stepped back, against the pier
'between the windows, when a shot struck the ceil-
'ing immediately over our heads, and covered us
'with dust and broken plaster. In a second after, I
'placed her upon the floor; and in another, a volley
'came against the whole front of the house, the
'balcony, and windows; one shot broke the mirror
'over the chimney-piece, another the shade of the
'clock; every pane of glass but one was smashed; the
'curtains and window-frames cut; the room, in short,
'was riddled. The iron balcony, though rather low,
'was a great protection; still fire-balls entered the
'room, and in the pause for reloading I drew my
'wife to the door, and took refuge in the back-rooms
'of the house. The rattle of musketry was incessant
'for more than a quarter of an hour after this; and
'in a very few minutes the guns were unlimbered
'and pointed at the "Magasin" of M. Sallandrouze,
'five houses on our right. What the object or
'meaning of all this might be was a perfect enigma
'to every individual in the house, French or foreigners.
'Some thought the troops had turned round and
'joined the Reds; others suggested that they must
'have been fired upon somewhere, though they cer-
'tainly had not from our house or any other on the
'Boulevard Montmartre, or we must have seen it
'from the balcony. . . . This wanton fusilade must
'have been the result of a panic, lest the windows
'should have been lined with concealed enemies, and

CHAP. XIV.

'they wanted to secure their skins by the first fire, or 'else it was a sanguinary impulse. . . . The men, as 'I have already stated, fired volley upon volley for 'more than a quarter of an hour without any return; 'they shot down many of the unhappy individuals 'who remained on the Boulevard, and could not 'obtain an entrance into any house; some persons 'were killed close to our door.'* The like of what was calmly seen by this English officer, was seen with frenzied horror by thousands of French men and women.

If the officers in general abstained from ordering the slaughter, Colonel Rochefort did not follow their example. He was an officer in the Lancers, and he had already done execution with his horsemen amongst the chairs and the idlers in the neighbourhood of Tortoni's; but afterwards imagining a shot to have been fired from a part of the Boulevard occupied by infantry, he put himself at the head of a detachment which made a charge upon the crowd; and the military historian of these events relates with triumph that about thirty corpses, almost all of them in the clothes of gentlemen, were the trophies of this exploit.† Along a distance of a thousand yards, going eastward from the Rue Richelieu, the dead bodies were strewed upon the foot-pavement of the Boule-

* Letter from Captain Jesse, first printed in the 'Times,' 13th December 1851, and given also in the 'Annual Register'

† This was in the Boulevard Poissonière. Mauduit, p. 217, 218 Mauduit speaks of these thirty killed as armed men, but it is well proved that there were no armed men in the Boulevard Poissonière, and I have therefore no difficulty in rejecting that part of his statement.

vard, but at several spots they lay in heaps. Some of the people mortally struck would be able to stagger blindly for a pace or two until they were tripped up by a corpse, and this, perhaps, is why a large proportion of the bodies lay heaped one on the other. Before one shop-front they counted thirty-three corpses. By the peaceful little nook or court which is called the Cité Bergère they counted thirty-seven. The slayers were many thousands of armed soldiery: the slain were of a number that never will be reckoned; but amongst all these slayers and all these slain there was not one combatant. There was no fight, no riot, no fray, no quarrel, no dispute.* What happened was a slaughter of unarmed men, and women, and children. Where they lay, the dead bore witness. Corpses lying apart struck deeper into people's memory than the dead who were lying in heaps. Some were haunted with the look of an old man with silver hair, whose only weapon was the umbrella which lay at his side. Some shuddered because of seeing the gay idler of the Boulevard sitting dead against the wall of a house, and scarce parted from the cigar which lay on the ground near his hand. Some carried in their minds the sight of a printer's boy leaning back against a shop-front, because, though the lad was killed, the proof-sheets which he was carrying had remained in his hands, and were red with his blood, and were fluttering in the wind.† The

* I speak here of the Boulevard from the Rue du Sentier to the western extremity of the Boulevard Montmartre.

† For accounts of the state of the Boulevard after the massacre, see the written statements of eyewitnesses supplied to Victor Hugo,

CHAP. XIV.

military historian of these achievements permitted himself to speak with a kind of joy of the number of women who suffered. After accusing the gentler sex of the crime of sheltering men from the fire of the troops, the Colonel writes it down that 'many an 'Amazon of the Boulevard has paid dearly for her 'imprudent collusion with that new sort of barricade;' and then he goes on to express a hope that women will profit by the example and derive from it 'a 'lesson for the future.'* One woman who fell and died clasping her child, was suffered to keep her hold in death as in life, for the child too was killed. Words which long had been used for making figures of speech, recovered their ancient use, being wanted again in the world for the picturing of things real and physical. Musket-shots do not shed much blood in proportion to the slaughter which they work; but still in so many places the foot-pavement was wet and red, that, except by care, no one could pass along it without gathering blood. Round each of the trees in the Boulevards a little space of earth is left unpaved in order to give room for the expansion of the trunk. The blood collecting in pools upon the asphalte, drained down at last into these hollows, and there becoming coagulated, it remained for more than a day, and was observed by many. 'Their blood,'—says the English officer before quoted,—'their blood lay in the

and printed in his narrative. It will be seen that I do not adopt M. Victor Hugo's conclusions; but there is no reason for questioning the authenticity or the truth of the statements which he has collected.

* Mauduit, p. 278.

'hollows round the trees the next morning when we 'passed at twelve o'clock.' 'The Boulevards and the 'adjacent streets,' he goes on to say, 'were at some 'points a perfect shambles.'* Incredible as it may seem, artillery was brought to bear upon some of the houses in the Boulevard. On its north side the houses were so battered that the foot-pavement beneath them was laden with plaster and such ruins as field-guns can bring down. CHAP. XIV.

The soldiers broke into many houses and hunted the inmates from floor to floor, and caught them at last and slaughtered them. These things, no doubt, they did under a notion that shots had been fired from the house which they entered; but it is certain that in almost all these instances, if not in every one of them, the impression was false. One or two soldiers would be seen rushing furiously at some particular door, and this sight leading their comrades to imagine that a shot had been fired from the windows above, was enough to bring into the accused house a whole band of slaughterers. The Sallandrouze carpet warehouse was thus entered. Fourteen helpless people shrank for safety behind some piles of carpets. The soldiers killed them crouching.

Slaughter in central Paris.

Whilst these things were being done upon the Boulevard, four brigades were converging upon the streets where resistance, though of a rash and feeble kind, had been really attempted. One after another the barricades were battered by artillery, and then carried without a serious struggle; but things had

* Mauduit, p. 278.

CHAP. XIV.

been so ordered that, although there should be little or no fighting, there might still be slaughter, for the converging movement of the troops prevented escape, and forced the people sooner or later into a street barred by troops on either side, and then, whether they were combatants or other fugitives, they were shot down. It was the success of this contrivance for penning in the fugitive crowds, which enabled Magnan to declare, without qualifying his words, that those who defended the barricades in the quartier Beaubourg were put to death;* and the same ground justified the Government in announcing that of the men who defended the barricade of the Porte St Martin the troops had not spared one.† Some of the people thus killed were men combating or flying, but many more were defenceless prisoners in the hands of the soldiery who shot them. Whatever may have been the cause of the slaughter of the unoffending spectators on the Boulevard,‡ it is certain that the shooting of the prisoners taken at the barricades was brought about by causing the troops to understand that they were to give no quarter. Over and over again, no doubt, the soldiers, listening to the dictates of humanity, gave quarter to vanquished combatants; but their clemency was looked upon as a fault, and the fault was repaired by shooting the prisoners they had taken. Sometimes, as was natural, a house was opened to the fugitives, but

* See his Despatch dated, I think, the 9th December—'Moniteur.'

† The 'Patrie,' one of the official organs of the President, Dec. 6.

‡ See the discussion on this subject towards the close of the chapter.

CHAP. XIV.

Slaughter of prisoners.

this shelter did not long hold good. For instance, when the barricade near the Porte St Denis was taken, a hundred men were caught behind it, and all these were shot; but their blood was not reckoned to be enough; for, by going into the houses where there were supposed to be fugitives, the soldiers got hold of thirty more men, and these also they killed.* The way in which the soldiery dealt with the inmates of houses suspected of containing fugitives, can be gathered by observing what passed in one little street. After describing the capture of a barricade in the Rue Montorgueil, the military historian of these events says that searches were immediately ordered to be made in the public-houses. 'A hundred prisoners,' he says, 'were made in them, the most of whom had 'their hands still black with gunpowder—an evident 'proof of their participation in the contest. How, then, 'was it possible not to execute, with regard to a good 'many of them, the terrible prescriptions of the state 'of siege?'†

This killing was done under orders so stringent, and yet, in some instances, with so much of deliberation, that many of the poor fellows put to death were allowed to dispose of their little treasures before they died. Thus, one man, when told that he must die, entreated the officer in command to be allowed to send to his mother the fifteen francs which he carried in his pocket. The officer, consenting, took down the

* An officer engaged in the operation made this statement—not as a confession of sins, but as a narrative of exploits.

† Mauduit, p. 248.

CHAP. XIV.

address of the man's mother, received from him the fifteen francs, and then killed him. Many times over the like of this was done.

Mode of dealing with some of the prisoners at the Prefecture.

Great numbers of prisoners were brought into the Prefecture of Police, but it appears to have been thought inconvenient to allow the sound of the discharge of musketry to be heard coming from the precincts of the building. For that reason, as it would seem, another mode of quieting men was adopted. It is hard to have to believe such things, but according to the statement of a former member of the Legislative Assembly, who declares that he saw them with his own eyes, each of the prisoners destined to undergo this fate was driven, with his hands tied behind him, into one of the courts of the Prefecture, and then one of Maupas's police-officers came and knocked him on the head with a loaded club, and felled him—felled him in the way that is used by a man when he has to slaughter a bullock.*

Gradations by which slayers of vanquished men may be distinguished.

Troops are sometimes obliged to kill insurgents in actual fight, and unarmed people standing in the line of fire often share the fate of the combatants; what that is the whole world understands. But also

* M. Xavier Durrieu, formerly a member of the Assembly, is one of those who states that he was an eyewitness of these deeds, having seen them from the window of his cell. He says, 'Souvent quand la 'porte était renfermée les sergens de ville se jetaient comme des tigres 'sur les prisonniers attachés les mains derrière le dos. Ils les assom-'maient a coup de casse-tête. Ils les laissaient râlant sur la pierre ou 'plusieurs d'entre eux ont expiré. . . . Il en est ainsi ni plus ni 'moins; nous l'avons vu des fenêtres de nos cellules qui s'ouvraient 'sur la cour.'—*Le Coup d'Etat*, par Xavier Durrieu, ancien Representant du peuple, pp. 39, 40.

an officer has sometimes caused people to be put to death, not because they were fighting against him, nor even because they were hindering the actual operations of the troops, but because he has imagined that under some probable change of circumstance their continued presence might become a source of inconvenience or danger, and he has therefore thought it right to have them shot down by way of precaution; but generally such an act as this has been preceded by the most earnest entreaties to disperse, and by repeated warnings. This may be called a precautionary slaughter of bystanders, who are foolhardy or perverse, or wilfully obstructive to the troops. Again, it has happened that a slaughter of this last-mentioned sort has occurred, but without having been preceded by any such request or warning as would give the people time to disperse. This is a wilful and malignant slaughter of bystanders; but still it is a slaughter of bystanders whose presence might become inconvenient to the troops, and therefore, perhaps, it is not simply wanton. Again, it has happened (as we have but too well seen) that soldiers not engaged in combat, and exposed to no real danger, have suddenly fired into the midst of crowds of men and women who neither opposed nor obstructed them. This is 'wanton mas-' sacre.' Again, it has sometimes happened, even in modern times, that when men defeated in fight have thrown down their arms and surrendered themselves, asking for mercy, the soldiery to whom they appealed have refused their prayers, and have instantly killed

CHAP. XIV.

them. This is called 'giving no quarter.' Again, it has happened that defeated combatants, having thrown down their arms and surrendered at discretion, and not having been immediately killed, have succeeded in constituting themselves the prisoners of the vanquishing soldiery, but presently afterwards (as, for instance, within the time needed for taking the pleasure of an officer on horseback at only a few yards' distance) they have been put to death. This is called 'killing prisoners.' Again, defeated combatants, who have succeeded in constituting themselves prisoners, have been allowed to remain alive for a considerable time, and have afterwards been put to death by their captors with circumstances indicating deliberation. This is called 'killing prisoners 'in cold blood.' Again, soldiers after a fight in a city have rushed into houses where they believed that there were people who helped or favoured their adversaries, and, yielding to their fury, have put to death men and women whom they had never seen in combat against them. This is massacre of non-combatants, but it is massacre committed by men still hot from the fight. Again, it has happened that soldiery, seizing unarmed people whom they believed to be favourers of their adversaries, have nevertheless checked their fury, and, instead of killing them, have made them prisoners; but afterwards, upon the arrival of orders from men more cruel than the angry soldiery, these people have been put to death. This is called an 'execution of non-combatants in cold 'blood.'

CHAP. XIV.

Here, then, are acts of slaughter of no less than nine kinds, and of nine kinds so distinct that they do not merely differ in their accidents, but are divided, the one from the other, by strong moral gradations. It is certain that deeds ranging under all these nine categories were done in Paris on the 4th of December 1851, and it is not less certain that, although they were not all of them specifically ordered, they were, every one of them, caused by the brethren of the Elysée. Moreover, it must be remembered that this slaughtering of prisoners was the slaughtering of men against whom it was only to be charged that they were in arms, not to violate, but to defend the laws of their country.

Slaughter ranging under all those categories was caused by the confederates.

But there is yet another use to which, if it were not for the honest pride of its officers and men, it would be possible for an army to be put. In the course of an insurrection in such a city as Paris, numbers of prisoners might be seized either by the immense police force which would probably be hard at its work, or by troops who might shrink from the hatefulness of refusing quarter to men without arms in their hands; and the prisoners thus taken, being consigned to the ordinary jails, would be in the custody of the civil power. The Government, regretting that many of the prisoners should have been taken alive, might perhaps desire to put them to death, but might be of opinion that it would be impolitic to kill them by the hand of the civil power. In this strait, if it were not for the obstacle likely to be interposed by the honour and just pride of a warlike profession, platoons

Inquiry as to the alleged shooting of prisoners who were in the hands of the civil power.

CHAP XIV.

of foot-soldiers might be used—not to defend—not to attack—not to fight, but to relieve the civilians from one of the duties which they are accustomed to deem most vile, by performing for them the office of the executioner; and these platoons might even be ordered to help the Government to hide the deed by doing their work in the dead hours of the night.

Is it true that, with the sanction of the Home Office and of the Prefecture of Police, and under the orders of Prince Louis Bonaparte, St Arnaud, Magnan, Morny, and Maupas, a midnight work of this last kind was done by the army of Paris?

To men not living in the French capital, it seems that there is a want of complete certainty about the fate of a great many out of those throngs of prisoners who were brought into the jails and other places of detention on the 4th and 5th of December. The people of Paris think otherwise. They seem to have no doubt. The grounds of their belief are partly of this sort:—A family, anxious to know what had become of one of their relatives who was missing, appealed for help to a man in so high a station of life that they deemed him powerful enough to be able to question official personages, and his is the testimony which records what passed. In order, if possible, to find a clue to the fate of the lost man, he made the acquaintance of one of the functionaries who held the office of a 'Judge-Substitute.' The moment the subject of inquiry was touched, the 'Judge-Substi-'tute' began to boil with anger at the mere thought of what he had witnessed, but it seems that his indig-

nation was not altogether unconnected with offended pride, and the agony of having had his jurisdiction invaded. He said that he had been ordered to go to some of the jails and examine the prisoners, with a view to determine whether they should be detained or set free; and that, whilst he was engaged in this duty, a party of non-commissioned officers and soldiers came into the room and rudely announced that they themselves had orders to dispose of those prisoners whose fingers were black. Then, without regard to the protesting of the 'Judge-Substitute,' they examined the hands of the prisoners whom he had before him, adjudged that the fingers of many of them were black, and at once carried off all those whom they so condemned, with a view (as the 'Judge-Substitute' understood) to shoot them, or have them shot. That they were so shot the 'Judge-'Substitute' was certain, but it is plain that he had no personal knowledge of what was done to the prisoners after they were carried off by the soldiers. Again, during the night of the 4th and the night of the 5th, people listening in one of the undisturbed quarters of Paris would suddenly hear the volley of a single platoon—a sound not heard, they say, at such hours either before or since. The sound of this occasional platoon-firing was heard coming chiefly, it seems, from the Champ de Mars, but also from other spots, and, in particular, from the gardens of the Luxembourg, and from the esplanade of the Invalides. People listening within hearing of this last spot declared, they say, that the sound of the platoon-fire

CHAP. XIV.

was followed by shrieks and moans; and that once, in the midst of the other cries, they caught some piteous words, close followed by a scream, and sounding as though they were the words of a lad imperfectly shot and dying hard.

Partly upon grounds of this sort, but more perhaps by the teaching of universal fame, Paris came to believe—and, rightly or wrongly, Paris still believes—that during the night of the 4th, and again during the night of the 5th, prisoners were shot in batches and thrown into pits. On the other hand, the adherents of the French Emperor deny that the troops did duty as executioners.* Therefore the value of an Imperialist denial, with all such weight as may be thought to belong to it, is set against the imperfect proof on which Paris founds her belief; but men must remember why it is that any obscurity can hang upon a question like this. The question whether, on the night of a given Thursday and a given Friday, whole batches of men living in Paris were taken out and shot by platoons in such places as the Champ de Mars or the Luxembourg gardens—this is a question which, from its very nature, could not have remained in doubt for forty-eight hours, unless Paris at the time had lost her freedom of speech and her freedom of printing; and even now, after a lapse of years, if freedom were restored to France, the question would be quickly and righteously determined. Now it happens that those who took away from Paris her freedom of speech and her freedom of printing are

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii.

the very persons of whom it is said that during two December nights they caused their fellow-countrymen to be shot by platoons and in batches. So it comes to this, that those who are charged have made away with the means by which the truth might be best established. In this stress, Justice is not so dull and helpless as to submit to be baffled. Wisely deviating in such a case from her common path, she listens for a moment to incomplete testimony against the concealer, and then, by requiring that he who hid away the truth shall restore it to light, or abide the consequence of his default, she shifts the duty of giving strict proof from the accuser to the accused. Because Prince Louis and his associates closed up the accustomed approaches to truth, therefore it is cast upon them either to remain under the charge which Paris brings against them, or else to labour and show, as best they may, that they did not cause batches of French citizens to be shot by platoons of infantry in the night of the 4th and the night of the 5th of December.

Uncertainty as to the number of people killed.

The whole number of people killed by the troops during the forty hours which followed upon the commencement of the massacre in the Boulevards, will never be known. The burying of the bodies was done for the most part at night. In searching for a proximate notion of the extent of the carnage, it is not safe to rely even upon the acknowledgments of the officers engaged in the work, for during some time they were under an impression that it was favourable to a man's advancement to be supposed

CHAP. XIV.

to be much steeped in what was done. The colonel of one of the regiments engaged in this slaughter spoke whilst the business was fresh in his mind. It would be unsafe to accept his statement as accurate, or even as substantially true; but as it is certain that the man had taken part in the transactions of which he spoke, and that he really wished to gain credence for the words which he uttered, his testimony has a kind of value as representing (to say the least of it) his idea of what could be put forward as a credible statement by one who had the means of knowing the truth. What he declared was that his regiment alone had killed two thousand four hundred men. Supposing that his statement was anything like an approach to the truth, and that his corps was at all rivalled by others, a very high number would be wanted for recording the whole quantity of the slaughter.*

Total loss of the army in killed.

In the army which did these things, the whole number of killed was twenty-five.†

Effect of the massacre upon the people of Paris.

Of all men dwelling in cities the people of Paris are perhaps the most warlike. Less almost than any other Europeans are they accustomed to overvalue the lives of themselves and their fellow-citizens. With them the joy of the fight has power to overcome fear and grief, and they had been used to great street-battles; but they had not been used of late to witness the slaughter of people unarmed and

* The number of regiments operating against Paris was between thirty and forty, and of these about twenty belonged to the divisions which were actively employed in the work.

† Including all officers and soldiers killed from the 3d to the 6th of December. The official return, 'Moniteur,' p. 3062.

helpless. At the sight of what was done on that 4th of December the great city was struck down as though by a plague. A keen-eyed Englishman, who chanced to come upon some of the people retreating from these scenes of slaughter, declared that their countenances were of a strange livid hue which he had never before seen. This was because he had never before seen the faces of men coming straight from the witnessing of a massacre. They say that the shock of being within sight and hearing the shrieks broke down the nervous strength of many a brave though tender man, and caused him to burst into sobs as though he were a little child. CHAP. XIV.

Before the morning of the 5th the armed insurrection had ceased. From the first it had been feeble. On the other hand, the moral resistance which was opposed to the acts of the President and his associates had been growing in strength; and when the massacre began on the afternoon of the 4th of December, the power of this moral resistance was in the highest degree formidable. Yet it came to pass that, by reason of the strange prostration of mind which was wrought by the massacre, the armed insurrection dragged down with it in its fall the whole policy of those who conceived that by the mere force of opinion and ridicule they would be enabled to send the plotters to Vincennes. The Cause of those who intended to rely upon this scheme of moral resistance, was in no way mixed up with the attempts of the men of the barricades, but still it was a Cause which depended upon the high spirit of the people;

CHAP. XIV.

and it had happened that this spirit—perplexed and baffled on the 2d of December by a stratagem and a night attack—was now crushed out by sheer horror.

For her beauty, for her grandeur, for her historic fame, for her warlike deeds, for her power to lead the will of a mighty nation, and to crown or discrown its monarchs, no city on earth is worthy to be the rival of Paris. Yet, because of the palsy that came upon her after the slaughter on the Boulevard, this Paris—this beauteous, heroic Paris—this queen of great renown, was delivered bound into the hands of Prince Louis Bonaparte, and Morny, and Maupas or De Maupas, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy. And the benefit which Prince Louis derived from the massacre was not transitory. It is a maxim of French politics that, happen what may, a man seeking to be a ruler of France must not be ridiculous. From 1836 until 1848 Prince Louis had never ceased to be obscure except by bringing upon himself the laughter of the world; and his election into the chair of the Presidency had only served to bring upon him a more constant outpouring of the scorn and sarcasm which Paris knows how to bestow.* Even the suddenness and perfect success of the blow struck in the night between the 1st and the 2d of December had failed to make Paris think of him with gravity. But it was otherwise after three o'clock on the

Effect of the massacre in removing one of Louis Bonaparte's personal disqualifications.

* A glance at the 'Charivari' for '49, '50, and the first eleven months of '51, would verify this statement. The stopping of the 'Charivari' was one of the very first exertions of the supreme power which was seized in the night of the 2d of December.

4th of December; and it happened that the most strenuous adversaries of this oddly fated Prince were those who, in one respect, best served his cause; for the more they strove to show that he, and he alone, of his own design and malice had planned and ordered the massacre,* the more completely they relieved him from the disqualification which had hitherto made it impossible for him to become the supreme ruler of France. Before the night closed in on the 4th of December, he was sheltered safe from ridicule by the ghastly heaps on the Boulevard.

The fate of the provinces resembled the fate of the capital. Whilst it was still dark on the morning of the 2d, Morny, stealing into the Home Office, had intrusted his orders for instant and enthusiastic support to the zeal of every prefect, and had ordered that every mayor, every juge de paix, and every other public functionary who failed to give in his instant and written adhesion to the acts of the President, should be dismissed. In France the engine of State is so constructed as to give to the Home Office an almost irresistible power over the provinces, and the means which the Office had of coercing France were reinforced by an appeal to men's fears of anarchy, and their dread of the sect called 'Socialists.' Forty thousand communes were suddenly told that they must make swift choice between Socialism and anarchy and rapine on the one hand, and on the other a virtuous dictator and lawgiver, recommended and

The fate of the provinces.

* It will be seen (see *post*) that I question the truth of this charge against him.

CHAP. XIV.

warranted by the authority of Monsieur de Morny. The gifted Montalembert himself was so effectually caught in this springe that he publicly represented the dilemma as giving no choice except between Louis Bonaparte and 'the ruin of France.' In the provinces, as in Paris, there were men whose love of right was stronger than their fears of the Executive Government, and stronger than their dread of the Socialists; but the Departments, being kept in utter darkness by the arrangements of the Home Office, were slower than Paris in finding out that the blow of the 2d of December had been struck by a small knot of associates, without the concurrence of Statesmen who were the friends of law and order; and it would seem that, although the proclamations were received at first with stupor and perplexity, they soon engendered a hope that the President (acting, as the country people imagined him to be, with the support of many eminent Statesmen) might effect a wholesome change in the Constitution, and restore to France some of the tranquillity and freedom which she had enjoyed under the Government of her last King. There were risings, but every department which seemed likely to move was put under martial law. Then followed slaughter, banishment, imprisonment, sequestration; and all this at the mere pleasure of Generals raging with a cruel hatred of the people, and glowing with the glow of that motive—so hateful because so sordid—which in centralised states men call 'zeal.' Of these Generals there were some who, in their fury, went beyond all

the bounds of what could be dictated by anything like policy, even though of the most ferocious kind. In the department of the Allier, for instance, it was decreed, not only that all who were 'known' to have taken up arms against the Government should be tried by Court-Martial, but that 'those whose Socialist 'opinions were notorious' should be transported by the mere order of the Administration, and have their property sequestered. The bare mental act of holding a given opinion was thus put into the category of black crimes; and either the prisoner was to have no trial at all, or else he was to be tried, as it were, by the hangman. This decree was issued by a man called General Eynard, and was at once adopted and promulgated by the Executive Government.*

Motives for the ferocity of the measures taken.

The violence with which the brethren of the Elysée were raging took its origin, no doubt, from their terror; but now that they were able to draw breath, another motive began to govern them, and to drive them along the same road: for by this time they were able to give to their actions a colour which tended to bring them the support and goodwill of whole multitudes—whole multitudes distracted with fear of the democrats, and only longing for safety. For more than three years people had lived in dread of the 'Socialists;' and though the sect, taken alone, was never so formidable as to justify the alarm of a firm man, still it was more or less allied with the fierce species of democrat which men called 'Red,' and the institutions of the Republic being new and

Terror, and afterwards a hope of gaining support from men afraid of anarchy.

General dread of the Socialists.

* 'Moniteur,' 28th Dec.

CHAP. XIV.

weak, it was right for the nation to stand on its guard against anarchy; though many have judged that the defenders of order, being upheld by the voice of the millions no less than by the forces of intellect and of property, might have kept their watch without fear. But whether the thing from which people ran flying was a danger or only a phantom, the terror it spread brought numbers down into a state which was hardly other than abject. Of course, people thus unmanned would look up piteously to the Executive Government as their natural protectors, and would be willing to offer their freedom in exchange for a little more safety. So now, if not before, the company of the Elysée saw the gain which would accrue to them if they could have it believed that their enterprise was a war against Socialism. After the subjugation of Paris, the scanty gatherings of people who took up arms against the Government were composed, no doubt, partly of Socialists, but partly also of men who had no motive for rising, except that they were of too high a spirit to be able to stand idle and see the law trampled down. But the brotherhood of the Elysée was master —sole master—of the power to speak in print; and by exaggerating the disturbances going on in some parts of France, as well as by fastening upon all who stood up against them the name of the hated sect, they caused it to be believed by thousands, and perhaps by millions, that they were engaged in a valorous and desperate struggle against Socialism. In proportion as this pretence came to be believed,

The brethren of the Elysée take advantage of this.

They pretend to be engaged in a war against Socialism.

it brought hosts of people to the support of the Executive Government; and there is reason to believe that, even among those of the upper classes who seemed to be standing proudly aloof from the Elysée, there were many who secretly rejoiced to be delivered from their fear of the Democrats at the price of having to see France handled for a time by persons like Morny and Maupas.

Support thus obtained.

The truth is, that in the success of this speculation of the Elysée many thought they saw how to escape from the vexations of democracy in a safe and indolent way. When an Arab decides that the burnous, which is his garment by day and by night, has become unduly populous, he lays it upon an ant-hill in order that the one kind of insect may be chased away by the other; and, as soon as this has been done, he easily brushes off the conquering genus with the stroke of a whip or a pipe-stick. In a lazy mood well-born men thought to do this with France; and the first part of the process was successful enough, for all the red sort were killed or crushed or hunted away; but when that was done, it began to appear that those whose hungry energies had been made use of to do the work were altogether unwilling to be brushed off. They clung: even now, after the lapse of years,* they cling and feed.

Commissaries sent into the provinces.

The army in the provinces closely imitated the ferocity of the army of Paris; but it was to be apprehended that soldiery, however fierce, might deal only with the surface of discontent, and not strike

* Written in September 1861.

CHAP. XIV.

deep enough into the heart of the country. They might kill people in streets and roads and fields; they might even send their musket-balls through windows into the houses, and shoot whole batches of prisoners; but they could not so well search out the indignant friends of law and order in their inner homes. Therefore Morny sent into the provinces men of dire repute, and armed them with terrible powers. These persons were called Commissaries. In every spot so visited the people shuddered; for they knew by their experience of 1848 that a man thus set over them by the terrible Home Office might be a ruffian well known to the police for his crimes as well as for his services, and that from a potentate of that quality it might cost them dear to buy their safety.

The Church.

There have been times when the all but dying spark of a nation's life has been kept alive by the priests of her faith; and when this has happened, there has sprung up so deep a love between people and Church that the lapse of ages has not had strength to put the two asunder.* In France, it is true, the Church no longer wielded the authority which had belonged to her of old; but besides that the virtues of her humble and labouring priesthood had gained for her more means of guiding men's minds than Europe was accustomed to believe, she was a cohering and organised body. Therefore, at a moment when the whole temporal powers of the State had

* See Arthur Stanley's admirable account of the relations between Russia and her Church.

been seized by a small knot of men slyly acting in concert, and when the Parliamentary and judicial authority which might restrain their violence had been all at once overthrown, the Church of France, surviving in the midst of ruined institutions, became suddenly invested with a great power to do good or do evil. She might stand between the armed man and his victim; she might turn away wrath; she might make conditions for prostrate France. Or, taking a yet loftier stand, she might resolve to choose — and choose sternly — between right and wrong. She chose.

The priesthood of France were, upon the whole, a zealous, unworldly, devoted body of men; but already the Church which they served had been gained over to the President by the arrangements which led to the siege and occupation of Rome. Therefore, although the priests perceived that Maupas, coming privily in the night-time, had seized the generals and the statesmen of France, and had shut up the Parliament, and driven the judges from the judgment-seat, still it seemed to them that, because of Rome, they ought to side with Maupas. So far as concerned her political action in this time of trial, they suffered the Church of France to degenerate into a mere sub-department of the Home Office. In the rural districts, when the time for the Plebiscite came, they fastened tickets marked 'Yes' upon their people, and drove them in flocks to the poll.

Every institution in the country being thus suborned or enslaved, or shattered, the brethren of the

CHAP. XIV.

France dismanned.

Elysée resolved to follow up their victory over France. In the sense which will presently appear they resolved to disman her. It had resulted, from the political state of France during several years, that great numbers of the most stirring men in the country had belonged to clubs, which the law called 'secret societies.' A net thrown over this class would gather into its folds whole myriads of honest men; and indeed it has been computed that the number of persons then alive who at one time or other had belonged to some kind of 'secret society,' amounted to no less than two millions. If French citizens at some period of their lives had belonged to societies forbidden by Statute, it was enough (and, after a lapse of time, much more than enough) that the penalties of the law which they had disobeyed should be enforced against them. But it was not this, nor the like of this, that was done.

Prince Louis Bonaparte and Morny, with the advice and consent of Maupas, issued a retro-operative decree, by which all these hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen were made liable to be instantly seized, and transported either to the penal settlements in Africa, or to the torrid swamps of Cayenne.* The decree was as comprehensive as a law would be in England if it enacted that every man who had ever attended a political meeting might be now suddenly transported; but it was a hundred times less merciful; for, in general, to be banished to Cayenne was to be put to a slow, cruel, horrible death. Morny and

* Decree of 8th December, inserted in the 'Moniteur' of the 9th.

CHAP. XIV.

Maupas pressed and pressed the execution of this almost incredible decree with a ferocity which must have sprung in the first instance from terror, and was afterwards kept alive for the sake of that hideous sort of popularity which was to be gained by calling men Socialists, and then fiercely hunting them down. None will ever know the number of men who at this period were either killed or imprisoned in France, or sent to die in Africa or Cayenne; but the panegyrist of Louis Bonaparte and his fellow-plotters acknowledges that the number of people who were seized and transported within the few weeks which followed the 2d of December, amounted to the enormous number of twenty-six thousand five hundred.*

26,500 men transported.

France perhaps could have borne the loss of many tens of thousand of ordinary soldiers and workmen without being visibly weakened; but no nation in the world—no, not even France herself—is so abounding in the men who will dare something for honour and liberty, as to be able to bear to lose in one month between twenty and thirty thousand men, seized from out of her most stirring and most courageous citizens. It could not be but that what remained of France when she had thus been stricken should for years seem to languish and to be of a poor spirit. This is why I have chosen to say that France was dismanned

But besides the men killed and the men transported, there were some thousands of Frenchmen who were made to undergo sufferings too horrible to be here told. I speak of those who were enclosed in

* Granier de Cassaignac.

CHAP. XIV.

the casemates of the fortresses and huddled down between the decks of the Canada and the Duguesclin. These hapless beings were, for the most part, men attached to the cause of the Republic. It would seem that of the two thousand men whose sufferings are the most known, a great part were men whose lives had been engaged in literary pursuits; for amongst them there were authors of some repute, editors of newspapers, and political writers of many grades, besides lawyers, physicians, and others whose labours in the field of politics had been mainly labours of the intellectual sort. The torments inflicted upon these men lasted from two to three months. It was not till the second week in March that a great many of them came out into the light and the pure air of Heaven. Because of what they had suffered they were hideous and terrible to look upon. The hospitals received many. It is right that the works which testify of these things should be indicated as authorities on which the narrator founds his passing words;* but unless a man be under some special motive for learning the detailed truth, it would be well for him to close his eyes against those horrible pages; for if once he looks and reads, the recollection of the things he reads of may haunt him and weigh upon his spirit till he longs and longs in vain to recover his ignorance of what, even in this his own time, has been done to living men.

At length the time came for the operation of

* 'Le Coup d'Etat,' par Xavier Durrieu, ancien Representant du Peuple. 'Histoire de la Terreur Bonapartiste,' par Hippolyte Magen.

The Plebiscite.

what was called the Plebiscite. The arrangements of the plotters had been of such a kind as to allow France no hope of escape from anarchy and utter chaos, except by submitting herself to the dictatorship of Louis Bonaparte; for although the President in his Proclamation had declared that if the country did not like his Presidency they might choose some other in his place, no such alternative was really offered. The choice given to the electors did not even purport to be anything but a choice between Louis Bonaparte and nothing. According to the wording of the Plebiscite, a vote given for any candidate other than Louis Bonaparte would have been null. An elector was only permitted to vote 'Yes,' or vote 'No;' and it seems plain that the prospect of anarchy involved in the negative vote would alone have operated as a sufficing menace. Therefore, even if the collection of the suffrages had been carried on with perfect fairness, the mere stress of the question proposed would have made it impossible that there should be a free election: the same central power which, nearly four years before, had compelled the terrified nation to pretend that it loved a republic, would have now forced the same helpless people to kneel, and say they chose for their one only lawgiver the man recommended to them by Monsieur de Morny.

Causes rendering free election impossible.

Having the army and the whole executive power in their hands, and having preordained the question to be put to the people, the brethren of the Elysée, it would seem, might have safely allowed the proceeding

CHAP. XIV.

to go to its sure conclusion without further coercing the vote; and if they had done thus, they would have given a colour to the assertion that the result of the Plebiscite was a national ratification of their act. But, remembering what they had done, and having blood on their hands, they did not venture upon a free election. What they did was this: they placed thirty-two departments under martial law; and since they wanted nothing more than a sheet of paper and a pen and ink in order to place every other department in the same predicament, it can be said without straining a word, that potentially, or actually, the whole of France was under martial law.

The election under martial law.

Violent measures taken for coercing the election.

Therefore men voted under the sword. But martial law is only one of the circumstances which constitute the difference between an honest election and a Plebiscite of the Bonaparte sort. Of course, for all effective action on the part of multitudes, some degree of concert is needful; and on the side of the plotters, using as they did the resistless engine of the executive government, the concert was perfect. To the adversaries of the Elysée all effective means of concerted action were forbidden by Morny and Maupas. Not only could they have no semblance of a public meeting, but they could not even venture upon the slightest approach to those lesser gatherings which are needed for men who want to act together. Of course, in these days, the chief engine for giving concerted and rational action to bodies of men is the Press. But, except for the uses of the Elysée, there was no Press. All journals hostile to the plot were

silenced. Not a word could be printed which was unfavourable to Monsieur Morny's candidate for the dictatorship. Even the printing and distributing of negative voting-tickets was made penal; and during the ceremony which was called an 'election,' several persons were actually arrested, and charged with the offence of distributing negative voting-tickets, or persuading others to vote against the President. It was soon made clear that, so far as concerned his means of taking a real part in the election, every adversary of the Elysée was as helpless as a man deaf and dumb.

In one department it was decreed that any one spreading reports or suggesting fears tending to disquiet the people, should be instantly arrested and brought before a court-martial.* In another, every society, and indeed every kind of meeting, however few the persons composing it might be, was in terms prohibited;† and it was announced that any man disobeying the order would be deemed to be a member of a secret society within the meaning of the terrible decree of the 8th of December, and liable to transportation.‡ In the same department it was decreed, that every one hawking or distributing printed tickets, or even manuscripts, unless authorised by the mayor or the juge de paix, should be prosecuted; and the same prefect, in almost mad rage against freedom, proclaimed that any one who was caught in an en-

* Arrêté du Général d'Alphonse, Commandant l'état de siège dans le Departement du Cher, Article 4.

† Arrêté du Préfet de la Haute Garonne, Articles 1, 2, 3.

‡ Ibid., Article 3.

CHAP. XIV.

deavour to 'propagate an opinion' should be deemed guilty of exciting to civil war, and instantly handed over to the judicial authority.* In another department the sub-prefect announced that any one who threw a doubt on the loyalty of the acts of the Government should be arrested.†

These are samples of the means which generals and prefects and sub-prefects adopted for insuring the result; but it is hardly to be believed that all this base zeal was really needed, because from the very first the brethren of the Elysée had taken a step which, even if it had stood alone, would have been more than enough to coerce the vote. They fixed for the 20th and 21st of December the election to which civilians were invited; but long before this the army had been ordered to vote (and to vote openly without ballot), within forty-eight hours from the receipt of a despatch of the 3d of December. So all the land-forces of France had voted, as it were, by beat of drum, and the result of their voting had been made known to the whole country long before the time fixed for the civilians to proceed to election. France, therefore, if she were to dare to vote against the President, would be placing herself in instant and open conflict with the declared will of her own army, and this at a time when, to the extent already stated, she was under martial law.

Contrivance for coercing the election by the vote of the army.

Surprised, perplexed, affrighted, and all unarmed and helpless, France was called upon either to strive

France succumbed.

* Arrêté du Préfet de la Haute Garonne, Article 4.

† Arrêté du Sous-préfet de Valenciennes.

to levy a war of despair against the mighty engine of the French executive government, and the vast army which stood over her, or else to succumb at once to Louis Bonaparte and Morny and Maupas and Monsieur Le Roy St Arnaud. She succumbed. The brethren of the Elysée had asked the country to say 'Yes' or 'No:' should Louis Bonaparte alone build a new Constitution for the governance of the mighty nation? and when, in the way already told, they had obtained the 'Yes' from herds and flocks of men whom they ventured to number at nearly eight millions, it was made known to Paris that the person who had long been the favourite subject of her jests was now become sole lawgiver for her and for France. In the making of such laws as he intended to give the country, Prince Louis was highly skilled, for he knew how to enfold the creation of a sheer Oriental autocracy in a nomenclature taken from the polity of free European States. With the advice and consent of Morny, and no doubt with the full approval of all the rest of the plotters, he virtually made it the law that he should command, and that France should pay him tribute and obey.

Prince Louis sole lawgiver of France.

The laws he gave her.

It has been seen that the success of the plot of the 2d of December resulted from the massacre which took place in the Boulevard on the following Thursday; and since this strange event became the foundation of a momentous change in the polity of France, and even in the destinies of Europe, it is right for men to know, if they can, how and why it came to pass. At three o'clock on the afternoon of the 4th

Importance of the massacre on the Boulevard.

Inquiry into its cause.

CHAP. XIV.

of December, the ultimate success of the plot had seemed to become almost hopeless by reason of the isolation to which Prince Louis and his associates were reduced. But at that hour the massacre began, and before the bodies were cleared away, the brethren of the Elysée had Paris and France at their mercy. It was natural that wronged and angry men, seeing this cause and this effect, should be capable of believing that the massacre was wilfully planned as a means of achieving the result which it actually produced. Just as the Cambridge theologian maintained that he who looked upon a watch must needs believe in a watchmaker, so men who had seen the massacre were led to infer a demon. They saw that the massacre brought wealth and blessings to the Elysée, and they thought it a safe induction to say that the man who gathered the harvest as though it were his own must have sown the seed in due season. Yet, so far as one knows, this argument from design is not very well reinforced by external proof; and perhaps it is more consistent with the principles of human nature to believe that the slaughter of the Boulevard resulted from the mixed causes which are known to have been in operation, than from a cold design on the part of the President to have a quantity of peaceful men and women killed in order that the mere horror of the sight might crush the spirit of Paris. Without resorting to this dreadful solution, the causes of the massacre may be reached by fair conjecture.

The army, as we have seen, was burning with

hatred of the civilians, and its ferocity had been carefully whetted by the President and by St Arnaud. This feeling, apart from other motives of action, would not have induced the brave soldiery of France to fire point-blank into crowds of defenceless men and women; but a passion more cogent than anger was working in the bosoms of the men at the Elysée and the Generals in command, and from them it descended to the troops.

The passion of terror.

According to its nature, and the circumstances in which it is placed, a creature struck by terror may either lie trembling in a state of abject prostration, or else may be convulsed with hysteric energy; and when terror seizes upon man or beast in this last way, it is the fiercest and most blind of all passions. The French unite the delicate, nervous organisation of the south with much of the energy of the north; and they are keenly susceptible of the terror that makes a man kill people, and the terror that makes him lie down and beg. On that 4th of December, Paris was visited with terror in either form. The army raged and the people crouched; but army and people alike were governed by terror. It is very true that in the Boulevard there were no physical dangers which could have struck the troops with this truculent sort of panic; for even if it is believed that two or three shots were fired from a window or a housetop, an occurrence of that kind, in a quarter which was plainly prepared for sight-seeing and not for strife, was too trivial of itself to be capable of disturbing prime troops. But the President and his

CHAP. XIV.

associates, though they had succeeded in all their mechanical arrangements, had failed to obtain the support of men of character and eminence. For that reason they were obviously in peril; and if Morny and Fleury still remained in good heart, there is no reason for doubting that on the 4th of December the sensations of the President, of the two other Bonapartes, of Maupas, of St Arnaud, and of Magnan, corresponded with the alarming circumstances in which they were placed.

State of Prince Louis Bonaparte during the period of danger.

The state of the President seems to have been very like what it had been in former times at Strasburg and at Boulogne, and what it was years afterwards at Magenta and Solferino.* He did not on any of these five occasions so give way to fear as to prove that he had less self-control in moments of danger than the common run of peaceful citizens; but on all of them he showed that, though he had chosen to set himself heroic tasks, his temperament was ill-fitted for the hour of battle and for the crisis of an adventure. For, besides that (in common with the bulk of mankind) he was without resource and presence of mind when he imagined that danger was really quite close upon him, his complexion and the dismal looks he wore in times of trial were always against him. From some defect perhaps in the structure of the heart or the arterial system, his skin, when he was in a state of alarm, was liable to be suffused with a greenish hue. This discoloration might be a sign of high moral courage, because it would tend to show that the spirit was

* See Note in the Appendix.

warring with the flesh; but still it does not indicate that condition of body and soul which belongs to a true king of men in the hour of danger, and enables him to give heart and impulsion to those around him. It is obvious, too, that an appearance of this sort would be damping to the ardour of the by-standers. Several incidents show that between the 2d and the 4th of December the President was irresolute, and keenly alive to his danger. The long-pondered plan of election which he had promulgated on the 2d of December he withdrew the next day, in obedience to the supposed desire of the Parisian multitude. He took care to have always close to his side the immense force of cavalry, to which he looked as the means of protecting his flight; and it seems that, during a great portion of the critical interval, the carriages and horses required for his escape were kept ready for instant use in the stable-yard of the Elysée. Moreover, it was at this time that he suffered himself to resort to the almost desperate resource of counterfeiting the names of men represented as belonging to the Consultative Commission. But perhaps his condition of mind may be best inferred from the posture in which history catches him whilst he nestled under the wing of the army. CHAP. XIV.

When a peaceful citizen is in grievous peril, and depending for his life upon the whim of soldiers, his instinct is to take all his gold and go and offer it to the armed men, and tell them he loves and admires them. What, in such stress, the endangered citizen would be impelled by his nature to do, is

He gave all he had to the soldiers.

CHAP. XIV.

exactly what Louis Bonaparte did. The transaction could not be concealed, and the imperial historian seems to have thought that, upon the whole, the best course was to give it an air of classic grandeur by describing the soldiers as the 'conquerors' of a rugged Greek word, and by calling a French coin an 'obolus.' 'There remained,' said he, 'to the President, out of all his personal fortune, out of all his patrimony, a sum of fifty thousand francs. He knew that in certain memorable circumstances the troops had faltered in the presence of insurrection, more from being famished than from being defeated; so he took all that remained to him, even to his last crown-piece, and charged Colonel Fleury to go to the soldiers, conquerors of demagogy, and distribute to them, brigade by brigade, and man by man, this his last obolus.'* The President had said, in one of his addresses to the army of Paris, that he would not bid them advance, but would himself go the foremost and ask them to follow him. If it was becoming to address empty playactor's words of that sort to real soldiers, it certainly was not the duty of the President to act upon them; for there could not well be any such engagement in the streets of Paris as would make it right for a literary man (though he was also the chief of the State) to go and affect to put himself at the head of an army inured to war; but still there was a contrast between what was said and what was done, which makes a man smile as he passes. The President had vowed he would lead the

* Granier de Cassaignac, vol. ii. p. 431.

soldiers against the foe, and instead, he sent them all his money. There is no reason to suppose that the change of plan was at all displeasing to the troops; and this bribing of the armed men is only adverted to here as a means of getting at the real state of the President's mind, and thereby tracing up to its cause the massacre of the 4th of December.

He even signed the decree of the 5th of December.

Another clue, leading the same way, is to be found in the Decree by which the President enacted that combats with insurgents at home should count for the honour and profit of the troops in the same way as though they were fought against a foreign enemy.* It is true that this decree was not issued until the massacre of the 4th was over, but of course the temper in which a man encounters danger is to be gathered in part from his demeanour immediately after the worst moment of trial; and when it is found that the chief of a proud and mighty nation was capable of putting his hand to a paper of this sort on the 5th of December, some idea may be formed of what his sensations were on the noon of the day before, when the agony of being in fear had not as yet been succeeded by the indecorous excitement of escape.

State of Jerome Bonaparte.

Whilst Prince Louis Bonaparte was hugging the knees of the soldiers, his uncle Jerome Bonaparte fell into so painful a condition as to be unable to maintain his self-control, and he suffered himself to publish a letter in which he not only disclosed his alarm, but even showed that he was preparing to separate him-

* Decree of the 5th, inserted in the 'Moniteur' of the 7th Dec.

CHAP. XIV.

self from his nephew; for he made it appear (as he could do, perhaps, with strict truth) that although he had got into danger by showing himself in public with the President on the 2d of December, he was innocent of the plot, and a stranger to the counsels of the Elysée.* His son (now called Prince Napoleon) was really, they say, a strong disapprover of the President's acts, and it was natural that he should be most unwilling to be put to death or otherwise ill-treated upon the theory that he was the cousin and therefore the accomplice of Louis, for of that theory he wholly and utterly denied the truth. Any man, however firm, might well resolve that, happen what might to him, he would struggle hard to avoid being executed by mistake; and it seems unfair to cast blame on Prince Napoleon for trying to disconnect his personal destiny from that of the endangered men at the Elysée, whose counsels he had not shared. Still, the sense of being cast loose by the other Bonapartes could not but be discouraging to Prince Louis, and to those who had thrown in their lot with him.

Natural anxiety of Napoleon, son of Jerome.

Maupas, or De Maupas, was a man of a fine, large, robust frame, and with florid, healthy looks; but it sometimes happens that a spacious and strong-look-

Bodily state of Maupas.

* The letter will be found in the 'Annual Register.' It seems to have been sent at 10 o'clock at night on the 4th of December; but the writer evidently did not know that the insurrection at that time was so near its end as it really was, and his letter may therefore be taken as a fair indication of the state of his mind in the earlier part of the day. The advice and the mild remonstrance contained in the letter might have been given in private by a man who had not lost his calm, but the fact of allowing such a letter to be public discloses Jerome's motives.

ing body of that sort is not so safe a tabernacle as it seems for man's troubled spirit. It is said that the bodily strength of Maupas collapsed in the hour of danger, and that, at a critical part of the time between the night of the 2d of December and the massacre of the 4th, he had the misfortune to fall ill.

Finally, it must be repeated that on that 4th of December the army of Paris was kept in a state of inaction during all the precious hours which elapsed between the earliest dawn of the morning and two o'clock in the afternoon.

Grounds for the anxiety of the plotters, and of Magnan and the generals under him.

These are signs that the brethren of the Elysée were aghast at what they had done, and aghast at what they had to do. And it is obvious that Magnan and the twenty Generals who had embraced one another on the 27th of November, were now more involved in the danger of the plot than at first they might have expected to be; for the isolation in which the President was left, for want of men of character and station who would consent to come and stand round him, must have made all these Generals feel that even the sovereign warrant of 'an order from 'the Minister of War' was a covering which had become very thin.

Effect of anxious suspense upon French troops.

Now by nature the French people are used to go in flocks; and in their army there is not that social difference between the officers and the common soldiers which is the best contrivance hitherto discovered for intercepting the spread of a panic or any other bewildering impulse. With their troops, any impulse, whether of daring or fear, will often dart like light-

CHAP. XIV.

ning from man to man, and quickly involve the whole mass. Generally, perhaps, a panic in an army ascends from the ranks. On this day, the panic, it seems, went downwards. For six hours the army had been kept waiting and waiting under arms within a few hundred yards of the barricades which it was to attack. The order to advance did not come. Somewhere there was hesitation, and the Generals could not but know that even a little hesitation at such a time was both a sign and a cause of danger; but when they saw it continuing through all the morning hours of a short December day, they could hardly have failed to apprehend that the plot of the Elysée was collapsing for want of support, and they could not but know that, if this dread were well founded, their fate was likely to be a hard one.

The temperament of Frenchmen is better fitted for the hour of combat than for the endurance of this sort of protracted tension; and the anxiety of men of their race, when they are much perturbed and kept in long suspense, will easily degenerate into that kind of alarm which is apt to become ferocious. This was the kind of stress to which the troops were put on that 4th of December; and in the case of Magnan and the Generals under him, the pangs of having to wait upon the brink of action for more than two-thirds of a day were sharpened by a sense of political danger; for they felt that if, after all, the scheme of the Elysée should fail, their meeting of the 27th might cause them to be brought to trial. Any one knowing what those twenty-one Generals had on

their minds, and being also somewhat used to the French army, will almost be able to hear the grinding of the teeth and the rumbling of the curses which mark the armed Frenchman, when he rages because he is anxious. Even without the utterance of any words, the countenances of men thus disturbed would be swiftly read in a body of French troops; and though the soldiery and the inferior officers would not be able to make out very well what it was that was troubling the minds of the Generals, the sense of not knowing all would only make them the more susceptible of infection. On the other hand, it is certain that the instructions given to the troops prescribed the ruthless slaughtering of all who resisted or obstructed them; and although it is of course true that these directions would not compel or sanction the slaughter of peaceful crowds not at all obstructing the troops, still they would so act upon the minds of the soldiery that any passion which might chance to seize them would be likely to take a fierce shape.

Surmised cause of the massacre.

Upon the whole, then, it would seem that the natural and well-grounded alarm which beset the President and some of his associates was turned to anxiety of the raging sort when it came upon the military commanders, and that from them it ran down, till at last it seized upon the troops with so maddening a power as to cause them to face round without word of command, and open fire upon a crowd of gazing men and women.

If this solution were accepted, it would destroy the

CHAP. XIV.

theory which ascribes to Prince Louis Bonaparte the malign design of contriving a slaughter on the Boulevard as a means of striking terror, and so crushing resistance; but it would still remain true that, although it was not specifically designed and ordered, the massacre was brought about by him, and by Morny, Maupas, and St Arnaud,—all acting with the concurrence and under the encouragement of Fleury and Persigny. By them the deeds of the 2d of December were contrived and done; by them, and in order to the support of those same deeds, the army was brought into the streets; by their industry the minds of the soldiery were whetted for the slaughter of the Parisians; and, finally, by their hesitation, or the hesitation of Magnan their instrument, the army, when it was almost face to face with the barricades, was still kept standing and expectant, until its Generals, catching and transmitting in an altered form the terror which had come upon them from the Elysée, brought the troops into that state of truculent panic which was the immediate cause of the slaughter. It must also be remembered that the doubt which I have tried to solve extends only to the cause which brought about the massacre of the peaceful crowds on the Boulevard; for it remains unquestioned that the killing of the prisoners taken in the barricaded quarter was the result of design, and was enforced by stringent orders. Moreover, the persons who had the blood upon their hands were the persons who got the booty. St Arnaud is no more; but Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, Morny, Fleury, Maupas,

Magnan, and Persigny—all these are yet alive, and in their possession the public treasures of France may still be abundantly found.

It is known that the most practised gamesters grow weary sometimes of their long efforts to pry into the future which chance is preparing for them, and that in the midst of their anxiety and doubt they are now and then glad to accept guidance from the blind, confident guess of some one who is younger and less jaded than themselves; and when a hot-headed lad insists that he can govern fortune, when he 'calls the 'main,' as though it were a word of command, and shakes the dice-box with a lusty arm, the pale doubting elders will sometimes follow the lead of youth's high animal spirits; and if they do this and win, their hearts are warm to the lad whose fire and wilfulness compelled them to run the venture. Whether it be true, as is said, that in the hour of trial any of the brethren of the Elysée were urged forward by Colonel Fleury's threats, or whether, abstaining from actual violence, he was able to drive them on by the sheer ascendancy of a more ardent and resolute nature, it is certain that he well earned their gratitude, if by any means, gentle or rough, he forced them to keep their stake on the table. For they won—they won France. They used her hard; they took her freedom; they laid open her purse, and were rich with her wealth. They went and sat in the seats of Kings and Statesmen, and handled the mighty nation as they willed in the face of Europe. Those who hated freedom, and those also

Gratitude due to Fleury.

The use the Elysée made of France.

CHAP. XIV.

who bore ill-will towards the French people, made merry with what they saw.

These are the things which Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte did. What he had sworn to do was set forth in the oath which he took on the 20th of December 1848. On that day he stood before the National Assembly, and, lifting his right arm towards heaven, thus swore :—'In the presence of God, and 'before the French people represented by the National 'Assembly, I swear to remain faithful to the demo- 'cratic Republic one and indivisible, and to fulfil all 'the duties which the Constitution imposes upon me.' What he had pledged his honour to do was set forth in the promise, which of his own free will he addressed to the Assembly. Reading from a paper which he had prepared, he uttered these words :—'The votes of 'the nation, and the oath which I have just taken, 'command my future conduct. My duty is clear; 'I will fulfil it as a man of honour. I shall regard as 'enemies of the country all those who endeavour to 'change by illegal means that which all France has 'established.'

The oath which the President had taken.

His added promise as a 'man of 'honour.'

In Europe at that time there were many men, and several millions of women, who truly believed that the landmarks which divided good from evil were in charge of priests, and that what Religion blessed must needs be right. Now on the thirtieth day computed from the night of the 2d of December, the rays of twelve thousand lamps pierced the thick wintry fog that clogged the morning air, and shed their difficult light through the nave of the

The Te Deum.

historic pile which stands marking the lapse of ages and the strange checkered destiny of France. There waiting, there were the bishops, priests, and deacons of the Roman branch of the Church of Jesus Christ. These bishops, priests, and deacons stood thus expecting, because they claimed to be able to conduct the relations between man and his Creator; and the swearer of the oath of the 20th of December had deigned to apprise them that again, with their good leave, he was coming into 'the presence of God.' And he came. Where the kings of France had knelt, there was now the persistent manager of the company that had played at Strasburg and Boulogne, and with him, it may well be believed, there were Morny rejoicing in his gains, and Magnan soaring high above sums of four thousand pounds, and Maupas no longer in danger, and St Arnaud formerly Le Roy, and Fialin, more often called 'Persigny,' and Fleury the propeller of all, more eager, perhaps, to go and be swift to spend his winnings, than to sit in a cathedral and think how the fire of his temperament had given him a strange power over the fate of a nation. When the Church perceived that the swearer of the oath and all his associates were ready, she began her service. Having robes whereon all down the back there was embroidered the figure of a cross, and being, it would seem, without fear, the bishops and priests went up to the high altar, and scattered rich incense, and knelt and rose, and knelt and rose again. Then, in the hearing of thousands, there pealed through the aisles that hymn of praise which purports

CHAP. XIV.

to waft into heaven the thanksgivings of a whole people for some new and signal mercy vouchsafed to them by Almighty God. It was because of what had been done to France within the last thirty days that the Hosannas arose in Notre Dame. Moreover, the priests lifted their voices and cried aloud, chanting and saying to the Most High, 'Domine, salvum fac Ludovi-'cum Napoleonem'—Oh Lord! save Louis Napoleon.

What is good, and what is evil? and who is he that deserves the prayers of a nation? If any man, being scrupulous and devout, was moved by the events of December to ask these questions of his Church, he was answered that day in the Cathedral of our Lady of Paris.

The President becomes Emperor of the French.

In the next December the form of the state system was accommodated to the reality, and the President of the Republic became what men call a 'French 'Emperor.' The style that Prince Louis thought fit to take was this:—'Napoleon the Third, by the Grace 'of God, and by the will of the people, Emperor of 'the French.'

The inaction of great numbers of Frenchmen at the time when their country was falling.

Of course, when any one thinks of the events of December 1851, the stress of his attention is apt to be brought to bear upon those who were actors, and upon those who, desiring to act, were only hindered from doing so by falling into the pits which the trappers had dug for them; but no one will fail to see that one of the main phenomena of the time was the wilful acquiescence of great numbers of men. It may seem strange that during a time of danger the sin of inaction should be found in a once free and always brave people. The cause of this was the

hatred which men had of democracy. A sheer democracy, it would seem, is so unfriendly to personal liberty, and therefore so vexing or alarming, not only to its avowed political enemies, but to those also who in general are accustomed to stand aloof from public affairs, that it must needs close its frail existence as soon as there comes home a General renowned in arms who chooses to make himself King. This was always laid down as a guiding principle by those who professed to be able to draw lessons from history; but even they used to think that, until some sort of hero could be found, democratic institutions might last. France showed mankind that the mere want of such a hero as will answer the purpose is a want which can be compensated by a little ingenuity. She taught the world that when a mighty nation is under a democracy, and is threatened with doctrines which challenge the ownership and enjoyment of property, any knot of men who can get trusted with a momentary hold of the engine of State (and somebody must be so trusted), may take one of their number who never made a campaign except with counterfeit soldiers, and never fired a shot except when he fired by mistake, and may make him a dictator, a lawgiver, and an absolute monarch, with the acquiescence, if not with the approval, of a vast proportion of the people. Moreover, France proved that the transition is not of necessity a slow one; and that, when the perils of a high centralisation and a great standing army are added to the perils of a sheer democracy, then freedom, although it be hedged round and

Its cause.

CHAP. XIV.

guarded by all the contrivances which clever, thoughtful, and honest Republicans can devise, may be stolen and made away with in one dark winter night, as though it were a purse or a trinket.

The gentlemen of France resolved to stand aloof from the Government.

Although France lost her freedom, it would be an error to imagine that upon the ruins of the commonwealth there was founded a monarchy like that, for instance, which governs the people of Russia. In empires of that kind the Sovereign commands the services of all his subjects. In France, for the most part, the gentlemen of the country resolved to stand aloof from the Government, and not only declined to vouchsafe their society to the new occupant of the Tuileries, but even looked cold upon any stray person of their own station who suffered himself to be tempted thither by money. They were determined to abide their time, and in the meanwhile to do nothing which would make it inconsistent for them, as soon as it suited their policy, to take an opportunity of laying cruel hands on the new Emperor and his associates. It was obvious that, because of the instinct which makes creatures cling to life, a monarch thus kept always standing on the very edge of a horrible fate, but still having for the time in his hands the engine of the State, would be driven by the very law of his being to make use of the forces of the nation as means of safety for himself and his comrades; and that to that one end, not only the operations of the Home Government, but even the foreign policy of the country, would be steadily aimed. And so it happened. After the 2d December in

The constant peril in which the confederates were kept.

The foreign policy of

the year 1851, the foreign policy of France was used for a prop to prop the throne which Morny and his friends had built up.

France was used to prop the new throne.

Therefore, although I have dwelt awhile upon a singular passage in the domestic history of France, I have not digressed. The origin of the war with Russia could not be traced without showing what was the foreign policy of France at the time when the mischief was done; and since it happened that the foreign policy of France was new to the world, and was governed in all things by the personal exigencies of those who wielded it, no one could receive a true impression of its aim and purpose without first gathering some idea of the events by which the destinies of Europe were connected with the hopes and fears of Prince Louis and Morny and Fleury, of Magnan and Persigny and Maupas and Monsieur Le Roy St Arnaud.

CHAPTER XV.

CHAP. XV.

Immediate effect of the coup d'état upon the tranquillity of Europe.

ALMOST instantly the change which was wrought by these French transactions began to act upon Europe. The associates of the Elysée well understood that if they had been able to trample upon France and her laws, their success had been made possible by the dread which the French people had of a return to tumult; and it was clear that, until they could do something more than merely head the police of the country, their new power would be hardly more stable than the passing terrors on which it rested. What they had to do was to distract France from thinking of her shame at home by sending her attention abroad. For their very lives' sake they had to make haste, and to pile up events which might stand between them and the past, and shelter them from the peril to which they were brought whenever men's thoughts were turned to the night of the 2d of December, and the Thursday, the day of blood. There could be no hesitating about this. Ambition had nothing to do with it. It was matter of life and death. If Prince Louis and Morny and

The policy which it necessitated.

Fleury, if Maupas, St Arnaud, and Magnan, were to continue quartered upon France instead of being thrown into prison and brought to trial, it was indispensable that Europe should be disturbed. Without delay the needful steps were taken.

It must have been within a week or two after the completion of the arrangements consequent on the night of the 2d of December, that the despatches went from Paris which caused M. de Lavalette to wring from the Porte the Note of the 9th of February,* and forced the Sultan into engagements unfair and offensive to Russia. The French President steadily continued this plan of driving the Porte into a quarrel with the Czar, until at length he succeeded in bringing about the event† which was followed by the advance of the Russian armies; but the moment the Czar was wrought up into a state of anger which sufficed to make him a disturber of Europe, Prince Louis, now Emperor of the French, sagaciously perceived that it might be possible for him to take violent means of appeasing the very troubles which he himself had just raised; and to do this by suddenly declaring for a conservative policy in Turkey, and offering to put himself in concert with one of the great settled States of Europe. England, he knew, had always clung to a conservative policy in the East. France, he also knew, of late years, had generally done the reverse, but then France was utterly

The French Government coerced the Sultan into measures offensive to Russia.

And then sought an alliance with England.

* 1852. See *ante*.

† The delivery of the key and the star to the Latin monks at Bethlehem in December 1852. See *ante*.

CHAP. XV.

in his power; and it seemed to him that, by offering to thrust France into an English policy, he might purchase for himself an alliance with the Queen, and win for his new throne a sanction of more lasting worth than Morny's well-warranted return of his eight millions of approving Frenchmen. Above all, if he could be united with England he might be able to enter upon that conspicuous action in Europe which was needful for his safety at home, and might do this without bringing upon himself any war of a dangerous kind.

Personal feelings of the new Emperor.

Another motive of a narrower sort was urging him in the same direction. Hating freedom, hating the French people, and delighting in an incident which he looked upon as reducing the theory of Representative Government to the absurdum, Nicholas had approved and enjoyed the treatment inflicted upon France by throwing her into the felon's van and sending her to jail; but he had objected to the notion of the second Napoleon being called 'the Third;'* and, in a spirit still more pedantic, he had refused to address the French sovereign in the accustomed form. He would call him his 'good friend,' but no earthly

* It is said, I know not with what truth, that the style of the new Emperor was the result of a clerical error. In the course of its preparations for constituting the Empire, the Home Office wished the country to take up a word which should be intermediate between 'President' and 'Emperor;' so the minister determined to order that France should suddenly burst into a cry of 'Vive Napoleon!' and he wrote, they say, the following order, 'Que le mot d'ordre soit Vive Napoleon!!!' The clerk, they say, mistook the three notes of admiration for Roman numerals; and in a few hours the forty thousand communes of France had cried out so obediently for 'Napoleon III.,' that the Government was obliged to adopt the clerk's blunder.

power should make him add the word 'brother.' The taunting society of Petersburg amused itself with the amputated phrase, and loved to call the ruler of France their 'good friend.' The new Emperor chafed at this, for his vanity was hurt; but he abided his time. CHAP. XV.

The French Emperor's scheme for superseding the concord of the four Powers by drawing England into a separate alliance with himself.

At length, nay so early as the 28th of January 1853, the French Emperor perceived that his measures had effectually roused the Czar's hostility to the Sultan, and he instantly proposed to England that the two Powers should act together in extinguishing the flames which he himself had just kindled, and should endeavour to come to a joint understanding, with a view to resist the ambition of Russia. Knowing beforehand what the policy of England was, he all at once adopted it, and proposed it to our Government in the very terms always used by English statesmen. He took, as it were, an 'old copy' of the first English speech from the throne which came to his hand, and, following its words, declared that the first object should be to 'preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.'* From that moment until the summer of 1855, and perhaps even down to a still later period, he did not once swerve from the great scheme of forming and maintaining an offensive alliance with England against the Czar, and to that object he subordinated all other considerations. He had at that time the rare gift of being able to keep himself alive to the proportionate value of political objects. He knew

* 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 68.

CHAP. XV.

how to give up the less for the sake of attaining and keeping the greater. Governed by this principle, he gradually began to draw closer and closer towards England; and when the angry Czar imagined that he was advancing in the cause of his Church against a resolute champion of the Latins, his wily adversary was smiling perhaps with Lord Cowley about the 'key' and the 'cupola,' and preparing to form an alliance on strictly temporal grounds.

It would have been well for Europe if the exigences of the persons then wielding the destinies of France would have permitted the State to rest content with that honest share of duty which fell to the lot of each of the four Powers when the intended occupation of the Principalities was announced. Neither the interest nor the honour of France required that in the Eastern Question she should stand more forward than any other of the remonstrant States; but the personal interest of the new Emperor and his December friends did not at all coincide with the interest of France; for what he and his associates wanted, and what in truth they really needed, was to thrust France into a conflict which might be either diplomatic or warlike, but which was at all events to be of a conspicuous sort, tending to ward off the peril of home politics, and give to the fabric of the 2d of December something like station and celebrity in Europe. In order to achieve this, it clearly would not suffice for France to be merely one of a conference of four great Powers

quietly and temperately engaged in repressing the encroachment of the Czar. Her part in such a business could not possibly be so prominent nor so animating as to draw away the attention of the French from the persons who had got into their palaces and their offices of State. On the other hand, a close, separate, and significant alliance with England, and with England alone, to the exclusion of the rest of the four Powers, would not only bring about the conflict which was needed for the safety and comfort of the Tuileries, but would seem in the eyes of the mistaken world to give the sanction of the Queen's pure name to the acts of the December night and the Thursday the day of blood. The unspeakable value of this moral shelter to persons in the condition of the new French Monarch, and St Arnaud, Morny, and Maupas, can never be understood except by those who look back and remember how exalted the moral station of England was, in the period which elapsed between the 10th of April 1848 and the time when she suffered herself to become entangled in engagements with the French Emperor.

It would have been right enough that France and England, as the two great maritime Powers, should have come to an understanding with each other in regard to the disposition of their fleets; but even if they had been concerting for only that limited purpose, it would have been right that the general tenor and object of their naval arrangements should have received the antecedent approval of the two

CHAP. XV.

other Powers with whom they were in cordial agreement. The English Government, however, not only consented to engage in naval movements which affected — nay, actually governed—the question of peace or war, but fell into the error of concerting these movements with France alone, and doing this not because of any difference which had arisen between the four Powers, but simply because France and England were provided with ships; so that in truth the Western Powers, merely because they were possessed of the implement which enabled them to put a pressure upon the Czar, resolved to act as though they were the only judges of the question whether the pressure should be applied or not; and this at a time when, as Lord Clarendon declared in Parliament, the four Powers were 'all acting cordially together.' Of course, this wanton segregation tended to supersede or dissolve the concord which bound the four Powers, and, as a sure consequence, to endanger yet more than ever the cause of peace. Some strange blindness prevented Lord Aberdeen from seeing the path he trod, or rather prevented him from seeing it with a clearness conducive to action. But what the French Emperor wanted was even more than this, and what he wanted was done. It is true that neither admiration nor moral disapproval of the conduct of princes ought to have any exceeding sway over our relations with foreign States; and if we had had the misfortune to find that the Emperor of the French was the only potentate in Europe whose policy was in accord with our

own, it might have been right that closer relations of alliance with France (however humiliating they might seem in the eyes of the moralist) should have followed our separation from the other States of Europe. But no such separation had occurred. What the French Emperor ventured to attempt, and what he actually succeeded in achieving, was to draw England into a distinct and separate alliance with himself, not at a time when she was isolated, but at a moment when she was in close accord with the rest of the four Powers.

Towards the close of the Parliamentary session of 1853, the determination on the part of Austria to rid the Principalities of their Russian invaders was growing in intensity. Prussia also was firm; and in principle the concord of the four Powers was so exact, that it extended, as was afterwards seen, not only to the terms on which the difference between Russia and Turkey should be settled, but to the ulterior arrangements which might be pressed upon Russia at the conclusion of the war which she was provoking. 'The four great Powers,' said Lord Aberdeen on the 12th of August, 'are now 'acting in concert.'* 'In all these transactions,' said Lord Clarendon,† 'Austria, England, Prussia, 'and France are all acting cordially together, in 'order to check designs which they consider incon- 'sistent with the balance of power, and with those 'territorial limits which have been established by 'various treaties.'

* 129 Hansard, p. 1650. † Ibid. p. 1423.

CHAP. XV.

The nature of the understanding of Midsummer 1853 between France and England.

Yet it cannot be doubted that in the midst of this perfect concord of the four Powers, the English Government was induced to enter into a separate understanding with the Emperor of the French.* This was the fatal transaction which substituted a cruel war for the peaceful but irresistible pressure which was exerted by the four Powers. The purport of this arrangement still lurks in private notes, and in recollections of private interviews; but it can be seen that (for reasons never yet explained) France and England were engaging to move in advance of the other Powers. The four Powers, being all of one mind, were still to remain in concert so far as concerned the discussion and adjudication of the questions pending between Russia and Turkey; but France and England were to volunteer to enforce their judgment. The four Powers were to be judges, and two of them—namely, France and England—were to be the executioners. What made this arrangement the more preposterous, was that the outrage of which Europe complained was the occupation of two provinces which abutted upon the Austrian dominions. Of all the great Powers, Austria was the chief sufferer. Austria was upon the spot. Austria was the one Power which instantly and in a summary way could force the Czar to quit his hold; and yet the charge of undertaking a duty which pressed upon her more than upon any other State in Europe, was voluntarily taken upon themselves by two States whose dominions were vastly distant

* 129 Hansard, pp. 1424, 1768, 1826.

from the scene of the evil deed. It was much as though the forces of the United States and of Brazil were to come across the Atlantic to defend Antwerp from the French, whilst the English looked on and thanked their enterprising friends for relieving them of their duty.

There was not, perhaps, more than one of the members of the English Cabinet who desired the formation of this singular alliance on grounds like those which moved the French Emperor; and it is believed that Lord Aberdeen and several other members of the Government were much governed by a shallow theory which had prevailed for some years amongst public men. The theory was, that close union between France and England was a security for the peace of Europe. 'Sure I am,' said one confident man, who echoed the crude thought of many—'sure I am, that 'if the advisers of the Crown in this country act 'in cordial concert with the Government of the 'Emperor of the French, and if the forces of the 'two countries in the Mediterranean are to act in 'concert, then it will be almost impossible that any 'war can disturb the peace of Europe.' But of course, to men of more statesmanlike views, the main temptation was the prospect of seeing France dragged into the policy which England had always entertained upon the Eastern Question.

Perhaps it will be thought that the practice of hiding away momentous engagements between States in the folds of private notes may now and then justify an endeavour to infer the nature of an agree-

CHAP. XV.

ment secretly made between two Governments from the tenor of their subsequent actions, and from a knowledge of surrounding facts. If this licence were to be granted, and if also it were to be assumed that the English as well as the French Government was negotiating with open eyes, it might perhaps be laid down that the compact of Midsummer 1853 was virtually of this sort:—'The Emperor of the French 'shall set aside the old views of the French Foreign 'Office, and shall oblige France with all her forces 'to uphold the Eastern policy of England. In con- 'sideration of this sacrifice of French interests by the 'French Emperor, England promises to give her 'moral sanction (in the way hereinafter prescribed) to 'the arrangements of December 1851, and to take 'the following means for strengthening the throne 'and endeavouring to establish the dynasty of the 'Emperor of the French: 1st, England shall give 'up the system of peaceful coercion which is involved 'in the concerted action of the four Powers, and shall 'adopt, in lieu of it, a separate understanding with 'France, of such a kind as to place the two Powers 'conspicuously in advance of the others, and in a state 'of more immediate antagonism to Russia with a 'prospect of eventual war. 2d, Even before any 'treaty of alliance is agreed upon, the Queen of 'England shall declare before all Europe that the 'Emperor of the French is united with Her Majesty 'in her endeavours to allay the troubles now threaten- 'ing Europe with war; and it shall not be competent 'to the English Government to weaken the effect of

'this announcement by advising Her Majesty to 'include any other Sovereigns in the same statement. 'If Her Majesty should continue to be closely in 'accord with the rest of the four Powers, she may 'be advised to speak of them in general terms as her 'allies, but they are not to be named. 3d, If hos- 'tilities should become necessary, the two Govern- 'ments will determine upon the measures to be 'adopted in common; and in that case also it is dis- 'tinctly understood that the English Government 'will advise the Queen not to shrink from the gratifi- 'cation of receiving the Emperor of the French as 'her guest. It is, of course, to be understood (*il va* '*sans dire*) that the reception of His Majesty at the 'English Court is to be in all respects the same as 'would be the reception of any other great Sovereign 'in alliance with the Queen. Whenever occasion re- 'quires it, the other actors in the operations of De- 'cember 1851 shall be received and treated by the 'English authorities with the honours due to the 'trusted servants of a friendly Power, and without 'objections founded on the transactions of December, 'or any of the circumstances of their past lives.' These are only imaginary words, but they show what the French Emperor was seeking to achieve, and they represent but too faithfully what the English Government did.

Every State is entitled to regard a foreign nation as represented by its Government. The principle is a sound one; but it must be owned that by this alliance the theory was pushed to an ugly conclusion.

CHAP. XV.

What happened was the like of this:—There came to us five men heavily laden with treasure, but looking hurried and anxious. They wanted to speak to us. Upon inquiring who they were, and comparing their answers with our other means of knowing the truth, we found that two of them bore names resulting in the usual way from marriages and baptisms,* and that the other three had been going by names which they had chosen for the sake of euphony. They said that suddenly they had become so struck with the soundness of our old-fashioned opinions, that they asked nothing better than to be suffered to devote the immense resources which they could command to the attainment of the object which we had always desired. All they wanted, in return, was that, in pursuing our own object side by side with them, we would promise not to suffer ourselves to be clogged by our old scruples against breaches of the peace; that we would admit them to our intimacy, allowing ourselves to be much seen with them in public; and that, in order to make our favour the more signal, we would consent to turn aside a little from our old friends: that was all. With regard to the question of how they had come by their treasure, and all the vast resources they offered us, their story was that they had all these things with the express consent of the former owner. There was something about them which made us fear that, if we repulsed them, they would carry their treasures to the very man who, at that moment, was giving

* These two were Prince Louis Bonaparte and Maupas.

us trouble. In truth, it seemed that, either from us or from somebody else, they must and they would have shelter. Upon their hands there was a good deal of blood. We shrank a little, but we were tempted much. We yielded: we struck the bargain. What we did was not unlawful, for those with whom we treated had for the time a real hold upon the people in whose great name they professed to come; and by the custom of nations we were entitled to say that we would know nothing of any France except the France that was brought to us by these five persons to be disposed of for the purposes of our 'Eastern Question;' but when we had done this thing, we had no right to believe that to Europe at large, still less to the gentlemen of France, the fair name of England would seem as it seemed before.

Announcement of it to Parliament.

But whatever were the terms of the understanding between the two Governments, the result of it was that the English Cabinet, disregarding the policy which only six days before had united it in a concerted action with the Powers represented at the Conference, now announced, through the lips of Lord Palmerston,* 'that England and France were 'agreed, that they continued to follow the same 'policy, and that they had the most perfect confidence 'in each other.' These words were enough to show any one used to foreign affairs that England was advancing with France into an adventurous policy, and then (though even then they were dangerously late) Members of Parliament might have stood

Failure of Parliament to understand the real import of the disclosure.

* 8th July 1853, in the House of Commons.

CHAP. XV.

forward with some hope of being able to check their country in her smooth descent from peace to war. They lost the occasion; it did not recur.

The Queen's Speech, August 1853.

At the close of the session, the Queen's Speech announced to Europe 'that the Emperor of the 'French had united with Her Majesty in earnest 'endeavours to reconcile differences, the continuance 'of which might involve Europe in war; and she 'declared that, acting in concert with her Allies, and 'relying on the exertions of the Conference then assembled at Vienna, Her Majesty had good reason 'to hope that an honourable arrangement would 'speedily be accomplished.'*

It would seem, at first sight, that this language had been occasioned by some accidental displacement of words; and that it could not have been intended for the Queen of England to say that she was acting in concert with her Allies assembled at Vienna, and to declare, in another limb of the same sentence, that she was 'united' with one of them. Unhappily, the error was not an error of words. The Speech accurately described the strange policy which our Government had adopted; for it was strictly true that, in the midst of a perfect concord between the four great Powers, the English Cabinet had been drawn into a separate union with France, and into an union of such a kind as to require the distinguishing phrase which disclosed the new league to Europe.

This Speech from the Throne may be regarded as

* 129 Hansard, p. 1826.

marking the point where the roads of policy branched off. By the one road, England, moving in company with the rest of the four Powers, might insure a peaceful repression of the outrage which was disturbing Europe; by the other, she might also enforce the right, but, joined with the French Emperor, and parted from the rest of the four Powers, she would reach it by passing through war. The Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen desired peace, and not war; but, seeing dimly, they took the adventurous path. They so little knew whither they were going that they made no preparation for war.*

This marks where the roads to peace and to war branched off.

* See Lord Aberdeen's evidence before the Sebastopol Committee.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHAP. XVI.

Count Nesselrode.

THE difference between a servant and a Minister of State lies in this:—that the servant obeys the orders given him, without troubling himself concerning the question whether his master is right or wrong; whilst a Minister of State declines to be the instrument for giving effect to measures which he deems to be hurtful to his country. The Chancellor of the Russian Empire was sagacious and politic; and his experience in the business of the State, and in the councils of Europe, went back to the great days when Nesselrode and Hardenberg, and Metternich and Wellington set their seals to the same charter. That the Czar was wrong in these transactions against Turkey no man in Europe knew better than Count Nesselrode; and at first he had the courage to speak to his master so frankly that Nicholas, when he had heard a remark which tended to wisdom and moderation, would cry out, 'That is what the Chancellor is per-'petually telling me!' But, unhappily for the Czar and for his empire, the Minister did not enjoy so commanding a station as to be able to put restraint upon his Sovereign, nor even perhaps to offer him

counsel in his angry mood. He could advise with Nicholas the Czar; but there were reasons which made his counsels unwelcome to a heated defender of the Greek faith. He was a member of the Church of England, and the maddening rumours of the day made out that into the jaws of this very Church of England Lord Stratford was dragging the Sultan and all his Moslem subjects. Then, too, Count Nesselrode was worldly; but, after all, the quality most certain to make him irksome to a Prince in a high state of religious or ecclesiastic excitement was his good sense. It was dangerous for a wise, able sinner like him to go near holy Nicholas the Pontiff, the Head of God's Orthodox Church upon earth, when he was hearing the voices from Heaven, when he was raging against the enemies of the Faith, and struggling to enforce his will upon mankind by utterances of the hated name of Canning,* and interjections, and gnashing of teeth. Far from being able to make a stand against this consuming fury, Nesselrode did not even decline to be the instrument for disclosing to all the world his master's condition of mind.

State of the Czar after knowing that the fleets of France and England were ordered to the mouth of the Dardanelles.

When the Czar knew that the fleets of the Western Powers were coming up into the Levant, and that the sword of England was now in the hands of Lord Stratford, he was thrown into so fierce a state, that his notions of what was true and what was not true—of what was plausible, and what was ascertainably false—of what was a cause, and what was an effect—of what happened first, and what happened

* The Czar used to call Lord Stratford 'Lord Canning.'

CHAP. XVI.

last,—nay, almost, it would seem, his notions of what was the Bosphorus and what was the Hellespont,*—became as a heap of ruins. He was in the condition imagined by the Psalmist, when he prayed the Lord that his enemy might be 'confounded.' Count Nesselrode was forced to gather up his master's shivered thoughts, and, putting them as well as he could into the language of diplomacy, to address to all the Courts of Europe a wild remonstrance against the measures of the Western Powers. The approach of their fleets to an anchorage in the Ægean outside the Straits of the Dardanelles was treated in this despatch as though it were little less than a seizure of Constantinople; and it was represented that this was an act of violence which had entitled and compelled the Czar, in his own defence, to occupy the Principalities.† Lord Clarendon seized this weak pretence and easily laid it bare; for he showed that Nicholas, in his anger, was transposing events, and that the Czar's resolve to cross the Pruth was anterior to the occurrence which he now declared to have been the motive of his action. Then, in language worthy of England, our Foreign Secretary went on to vindicate her right to send her fleets whither she chose, so long as they were on the high seas, or on the coasts of a Sovereign legitimately assenting to their presence. Nearly at the same time the writer of the French Foreign Office despatches

His complaints to Europe.

Their refutation.

* The despatch which gave utterance to this raving treated an anchorage in the Ægean, outside the Dardanelles, as almost a virtual occupation of Constantinople.

† 'Eastern Papers,' part i. p. 342.

pursued the Czar through Europe with his bright, cutting, pitiless logic.*

Of course, the vivacity of France and England tended to place Austria at her ease, and to make her more backward than she would otherwise have been in sending troops into the Banat; and, moreover, the separate action of the Western Powers was well calculated, as will be seen by-and-by, to undo the good which might be effected by the Conference of the four Powers at Vienna. The Conference, however, did not remit its labour. The mediating character which belonged to it in its original constitution was gradually changed, until at length it represented what was nothing less than a confederacy of the four Powers against Russia. It is true that it was a confederacy which sought to exhaust persuasion, and to use to the utmost the moral pressure of assembled Europe before it resorted to arms; and it is true also that it was willing to make the Czar's retreat from his false moves as easy and as free from shame as the nature of his late errors would allow: but these were views held by the English Cabinet as well as by the Conference; and it is certain that, if our Government had seen clear, and had been free from separate engagements, it would have stood fast upon the ground occupied by the four Powers, and would have refused to be drawn into measures which were destined to be continually undoing the pacific work of the diplomatists assembled at Vienna.

The Vienna Conference.

* These despatches bear the signature of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, but it was commonly believed at the time that they were written by a man on the permanent staff of the French Foreign Office.

CHAP. XVI.

The effect upon England of becoming entangled in a separate understanding with France.

But partnership with the midnight associates of the 2d of December was a heavy yoke. With all his heart and soul Lord Aberdeen desired the tranquillity of Europe; but he had suffered his Cabinet to enter into close friendly engagements with one to whom the tranquillity of Europe portended jail, and ill-usage, and death. The French Emperor had consented to engage France in an English policy; and he thought he had a right to insist that England should pay the price, and help to give him the means of such signal action in Europe as might drive away men's thoughts from the hour when the Parliament of France had been thrown into the felons' van.

The French Emperor's ambiguous scheme of action.

The object at which the French Emperor was aiming stands clear enough to the sight; but at this time the scheme of action by which he sought to attain his ends was ambiguous. In general, men are prone to find out consistency in the acts of rulers, and to imagine that numberless acts, appearing to have different aspects, are the result of one steady design; but those who love truth better than symmetry will be able to believe that much of the conduct of the French Emperor was rather the effect of clashing purposes than of duplicity. There are philosophers who imagine that the human mind (corresponding in that respect with the brain) has a dual action, and that the singleness of purpose observed in a decided man is the result of a close accord between the two engines of thought, and not of actual unity. Certainly it would appear that the Emperor Louis

Napoleon, more than most other men, was accustomed to linger in doubt between two conflicting plans, and to delay his final adoption of the one, and his final rejection of the other, for as long a time as possible, in order to find out what might be best to be ultimately done by carrying on experiments for many months together with two rival schemes of action.

But whether this double method of action was the result of idiosyncrasy or of a profound policy, it was but too well fitted for the object of drawing England into a war. The aim of the French Emperor was to keep his understanding with England in full force, and yet to give the alliance a warlike direction. If he were to adopt a policy frankly warlike, he would repel Lord Aberdeen and endanger the alliance. If he were to be frankly pacific, there would be a danger of his restoring to Europe that tranquillity which could not fail to bring him and his December friends into jeopardy. In this strait he did not exactly take a middle course. By splitting his means of action he managed to take two courses at the same time. There are people who can write at the same time with both hands. Politically, Louis Napoleon had this accomplishment. With his left hand he seemed to strive after peace; with his right he tried to stir up a war. The language of his diplomacy was pacific, and yet at the very same time he contrived that the naval forces of France and England should be used as the means of provoking a war. The part which he took in the negotiations going on at

His diplomacy seems pacific. At the same time he engages England in naval movements tending to provoke war.

CHAP. XVI.

Vienna, and in the other capitals of the great Powers, was temperate, just, and moderate; and it is probable that the Despatches which indicated this spirit long continued to mislead Lord Aberdeen, and to keep him under the impression that an Anglo-French alliance was really an engine of peace; but it will be seen that, as soon as the French Emperor had drawn England into an understanding with him, he was enabled to engage her in a series of dangerous naval movements, which he contrived to keep going on simultaneously with the efforts of the negotiators, so as always to be defeating their labours.

In order to appreciate the exceeding force of the lever which was used for this purpose, a man ought to have in his mind the political geography of south-eastern Europe, and the configuration of the seas which flow with a ceaseless current into the waters of the Ægean.

The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.

The Euxine is connected with the Mediterranean by the Straits of the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Straits of the Dardanelles. The Bosphorus is a current of the sea, seventeen miles in length, and in some places hardly more than half a mile broad, but so deep, even home to the shores on either side, that a ship of war can almost, as it were, find shade under the gardens of the European shore—can almost mix her spars with the cypresses which darken the coast of Asia. At its southern extremity the Bosphorus mingles with the waters of the great inlet or harbour which still often goes by the name of the Golden Horn; and at length, after passing

between Constantinople and its beautiful suburb of Scutari, the Straits open out into the land-locked basin now known as the Sea of Marmora, which used to be called the Propontis. At the foot of this inland sea the water is again contracted into a deep channel, no more, in one place, than three-quarters of a mile in breadth, and is not set free till, after a course of some forty miles, it reaches the neighbourhood of the Troad, and spreads abroad into the Ægean. These last are the famous straits between Europe and Asia which used to be called the Hellespont, and are now the Dardanelles. The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are both so narrow that, even in the early times of artillery, they could be commanded by guns on either side, and it followed that these waters had not the character of 'high seas.' And since the land upon either side belonged to the Ottoman Empire, the Sultans always claimed and always enjoyed a right to keep out foreign ships of war from both the straits. Now on the Black Sea Russia had as much seabord as Turkey, and nevertheless, like every other Power, she was shut out from all right to send her armed navy into the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. There being no other outlet, her Black Sea fleet was pent up in an inland basin. Painful as this duress must needs be to a haughty State having a powerful fleet in the Euxine, it would seem that Russia has been more willing to submit to the restriction than to see the war-flag of other States in the Dardanelles or the Bos-

The Sultan's ancient right to control them.

Policy of Russia in regard to the straits.

CHAP. XVI.

phorus. The presence of a force greater than her own, or even rivalling it, did not comport with the kind of ascendancy which she was always seeking to establish at Constantinople and on the seabord of the Euxine. Russia, therefore, had been a willing party to the treaty of 1841. By this treaty the five great Powers acknowledged the right of the Sultan to exclude armed navies from both the straits; and, on the other hand, the Sultan engaged that in time of peace he would always exercise this right of exclusion. Moreover, the five Powers promised that they would all respect this engagement by the Sultan. The result, therefore, was that, whether with or without the consent of the Sultan, no foreign squadron, at a time when the Sultan was at peace, could lawfully appear in either of the straits.* But when the Emperor Nicholas forcibly occupied the Principalities, it was clear that this act was a just cause of war whenever the Sultan might think fit so to treat it; and there was fair ground for saying that, even before a declaration of war, the invasion of the Sultan's dominions was such a violation of the state of peace contemplated by the treaty, that the Sultan was morally released from his engagement, and might be justified in asking his allies to send their fleets up through the straits. On the other hand, the appearance of foreign navies in the Dardanelles was regarded as so destructive to Russian ascendancy, that the bare prospect of it used to fill Russian statesmen with dismay; and the

The rights of the Sultan and the five Powers under the treaty of 1841.

How these rights were affected by the Czar's seizure of the Principalities.

* There were exceptions in favour of vessels having on board the Representatives of foreign States.

Emperor Nicholas held the idea in such horror that the mere approach of the French and English fleets to the Levant wrought him, as we have seen, to a state of mind which was only too faithfully portrayed by his Chancellor's Circular.

Powerful means of coercing the Czar.

It is plain, therefore, that the power of advising the Sultan to call up the French and English fleets was an engine of immense force in the hands of the Western Powers; but it is also certain that this was a power which would put a much harder stress upon Russia whilst it was kept suspended over her, than it was likely to do when it came to be physically used. To subject Nicholas to the fear of having to see foreign war-flags in the straits, was to apply a pressure well fitted for coercing him; but actually to exert the power was to break its spell, and to change the Czar's wholesome dread into a frenzy of anger hardly consistent with hopes of peace.

Importance of refraining from a premature use of the power.

The naval movements in which the French Emperor engages England.

The French Emperor had no sooner engaged the English Government in a separate understanding, than he began to insist upon the necessity of using the naval power of France and England in the way which he proposed — a way bitterly offensive to Russia. Having at length succeeded in forcing this measure upon England, he, after a while, pressed upon her another movement of the fleets still more hostile than the first, and again he succeeded in bringing the English Government to yield to him. Again, and still once again, he did the like, always in the end bringing England to adopt his hostile measures; and he never desisted from this course of action until,

CHAP. XVI.

at last, it had effected a virtual rupture between the Czar and the Western Powers.

Proofs of this drawn (in anticipation of a later part of the narrative) from transactions subsequent to the date of the Queen's Speech.

Not yet as part of this narrative, but by way of anticipation, and in order to gather into one page the grounds of the statement just made, the following instances are given of the way in which the English Government was, from time to time, driven to join with the French Emperor in making a quarrelsome use of the two fleets:—On the 13th of July 1853, the French Emperor, through his Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared to the English Government that if the occupation of the Principalities continued, the French fleet could not longer remain at Beshika Bay. On the 19th of August he declared it to be absolutely necessary that the combined fleets should enter the Dardanelles, and he pressed the English Government to adopt a resolution to this effect. On the 21st of September he insisted that the English Government, at the same moment as the French, should immediately order up the combined squadrons to Constantinople. On the 15th of December he pressed the English Government to agree that the Allied fleets should enter the Euxine, take possession of it, and interdict the passage of every Russian vessel. It will be seen that, with more or less reluctance and after more or less delay, these demands were always acceded to by England: and the course thus taken by the maritime Powers was fatal to the pending negotiations; for, besides that in the way already shown the Czar's wholesome fears were converted into bursts of rage, the Turks at the same time were

deriving a dangerous encouragement from the sight of the French and English war-flags; and the result was, that the negotiators, with all their skill and all their patience, were never able to frame a Note in the exact words which would allay the anger of Nicholas, without encountering a steadfast resistance on the part of the Sultan.

Some men will believe that a long series of acts, all having a tendency in the same direction, and ending at length in war, were deliberately planned by the French Emperor as a means of bringing about the result which they effected, and that the temperate and sometimes conciliatory negotiations which were carried on during the same period were a mask to the real intent. It is perhaps more likely to be true that the French Emperor was all this time hesitating, and keeping his judgment in suspense. What he needed, for his very life's sake, was to become so conspicuous, whether as a disturber or as a pacificator of other nations, that Frenchmen might be brought to look at what he was doing to others instead of what he had done to them; and if he could have reached to this by seeming to take a great ascendant in the diplomacy of Europe, it is possible that, for a while at least, he might have been content to spare the world from graver troubles; but whether he acted from design or under the impulse of varying and conflicting wishes, it is certain that that command of naval power, which was an engine of excellent strength for enforcing the restoration of tranquillity, was so used, by his orders and under his persuasion, as to become the means of provoking a war.

Means well fitted for enforcing a just peace were so used as to provoke war.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHAP. XVII.

Lord Stratford's scheme of pacification.

LORD STRATFORD, it would seem, was unconscious of his power over the mind of Nicholas, and did not understand that it rested with him to determine whether the Czar should be politic or raging. He did not know that, as long as he was at Therapia, every deed, every word of the Divan was regarded as coming from the English Ambassador; and that the bare thought of the Greek Church in Turkey being under the protection of 'Canning,' was the very one which would at any moment change the Czar from an able man of business to an almost irresponsible being. Taking the complaints of Russia according to their avowed meaning, the English Ambassador faithfully strove to remove every trace of the foundation on which they rested; and having caused the Porte to issue firmans perpetuating all the accustomed privileges of the Greek Church, he proposed that copies of these firmans should be sent to the Court of St Petersburg, together with a courteous Note from the Porte to Count Nesselrode, distinctly assuring the Chancellor that the firmans confirmed the privileges of the Greek Church in perpetuity, and virtually, therefore, en-

gaging that the grants should never be revoked.* This was doing exactly what Russia ostensibly required; but it was also doing exactly that which the Czar most abhorred, for to his mind it indicated nothing less than that the Greek Church was passing under the gracious protection of Lord Stratford. The polished courtesy of the Note imparting this concession only made it the more hateful, by showing on its face whence it came. However, Lord Stratford obtained for his plan the full approval of his French, Austrian, and Prussian colleagues, as well as of the Porte; and the Note, signed by Reshid Pacha, and enclosing copies of the new firmans, was despatched to Vienna, with a view to its being thence transmitted to St Petersburg. The packet which held these papers contained the very ingredients which were best fitted for disturbing the reason of the Czar. It happened, however, that at Vienna there were men who knew something of the psychological part of the Eastern Question, and they took upon themselves to arrest the maddening Note in its transit.

And now the representatives of the four Powers, conferring in the Austrian capital, succeeded in framing a document which soon became known to Europe under the name of the 'Vienna Note.' This paper, framed originally in Paris, was perfected and finally approved by all the four Powers conferring at Vienna. It was a draft of a Note understood to be brought forward by Austria in her mediating

The 'Vienna Note.'

* 20th July 1853. 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 15.

CHAP. XVII.

capacity, and proposed to be addressed by the Porte to the Russian Government. The parties to the Conference believed that the engagements purporting to be made by the Note made on the part of the Sultan might satisfy the Czar without endangering the true interests of Turkey. Indeed, the Austrian Government, somewhat forgetting its duty as a faithful mediator, had used means of ascertaining that the Note would be acceptable to Russia,* but without taking a like step in favour of the other disputant. Copies of the Note thus framed were sent for approval to St Petersburg and to Constantinople, and the acceptance of the arrangement was pressed upon the Governments of the two disputing States with all the moral weight which the four great Powers could give to their unanimous award.

Agreed to by the four Powers, and

Accepted by Russia.

The French Emperor does nothing to thwart the success of the Note.

And here it ought to be marked that at this moment the French Emperor did nothing to thwart the restoration of tranquillity. He perhaps believed that if a Note which had originated in Paris were to become the basis of a settlement, he might found on this circumstance a claim to the glory of having pacified Europe, and in that wholesome way might achieve the sort of conspicuousness which he loved and needed. Perhaps he was only obeying that doubleness of mind which made him always prone to do acts clashing one with another. But whatever may have been the cause which led him for a moment to intermit his policy, it is just to acknowledge that he seems to have been faithfully willing to give

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 27.

effect to the means of pacification which were proffered by the 'Vienna Note.' It soon became known that the Note was agreed to by the Emperor Nicholas. Men believed that all was settled. It was true that the courier who was expected to be the bearer of the assent of the Porte had not yet come in from Constantinople, but it was assumed that the representatives of the four Powers had taken the precaution of possessing themselves of the real views of the Turkish Government; and, besides, it was thought impossible that the Sultan should undertake to remain in antagonism to Russia, if the support which he had hitherto received from the four great Powers were to be transferred from him to the Czar.

Those who dwell far away from great cities can hardly, perhaps, believe that the touching signs of simplicity which they observe in rural life may be easily found now and then in the councils of assembled Europe. The Governments of all the four Powers, and their representatives assembled at Vienna, fondly imagined that they could settle the dispute and restore tranquillity to Europe without consulting Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. They framed and despatched the Note without learning what his opinion of it was, and it is probable that a knowledge of this singular omission may have conduced to make the Czar accept the award of the mediating Powers, by tempting him with the delight of seeing Lord Stratford overruled. But, on the other hand, the one man who was judge of what ought or ought not to be conceded by the Turks was

Lord Stratford had not been consulted.

CHAP. XVII.

Lord Stratford; and it is plain that any statesmen who forgot him in their reckoning must have been imperfect in their notion of political dynamics. It would be wrong to suppose that a sound judgment by the four Powers would be liable to be overturned by Lord Stratford from any mere feeling of neglect. He was too proud, as well as too honest, to be capable of such a littleness. What was to be apprehended was, that until it was ratified by the English Ambassador at the Porte, the decision of a number of men in Vienna and Paris and London and Berlin might turn out to be really erroneous, or might seem to be so in the eyes of one who was profoundly versed in the subject; and no man had a right to make sure that, even at the instance of all Europe, this strong-willed Englishman would consent to use his vast personal ascendancy as a means of forcing upon the Turks a surrender which he held to be dangerous.

Early in August the Vienna Note reached Constantinople; and the Turkish Government soon detected in it not only a misrecital of history, but words of a dangerous sort, conveying or seeming to convey to Russia, under a new form, that very protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey which had brought about the rupture of the negotiation conducted by Prince Mentschikoff. The four Powers, however, had determined to press the acceptance of the arrangement upon the Porte; and on the 12th it became known at Constantinople that the Note had been accepted by the Emperor Nicholas. On the same

day the English Ambassador received instructions from London, which informed him that the English Government 'adhered to the Vienna Note, and con- 'sidered that it fully guarded the principle which 'had been contended for, and might therefore with 'perfect safety be signed by the Porte;' and Lord Clarendon went on to express a hope that the Ambassador would have 'found no difficulty in procuring the 'assent of the Turkish Government to a project 'which the allies of the Sultan unanimously con- 'curred in recommending for his adoption.'*

The 'Vienna 'Note' in the hands of Lord Stratford.

It cannot be doubted that Lord Stratford's opinion as to the effect of the Vienna Note was opposed to that of his Government,† but it was his duty to obey. He obeyed. He 'scrupulously abstained from ex- 'pressing any private opinion of his on the Note 'whilst it was under consideration at the Porte,' and he conveyed to the Turkish Government the desire of Europe. 'I called the attention of Reshid Pa- sha,' said he, 'to the strong and earnest manner in 'which the Vienna Note was recommended to the 'acceptance of the Porte, not only by Her Majesty's 'Government, but also by the Cabinets of Austria, 'France, and Prussia. I reminded him of the intel- 'ligence which had been received from St Peters- 'burg, purporting that the Emperor of Russia 'had signified his readiness to accept the same 'Note. I urged the importance of his engaging the 'Porte to come to a decision with the least possible 'delay. I repeatedly urged the importance of an

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 27. † Ibid. pp. 72, 82.

CHAP. XVII.

'immediate decision, and the danger of declining, or 'only accepting with amendments, what the four 'friendly Powers so earnestly recommended, and 'what the Cabinet of St Petersburg had accepted 'in its actual state.'*

These were dutiful words. But it is not to be believed that, even if he strove to do so, Lord Stratford could hide his real thoughts from the Turkish Ministers. There was that in his very presence which disclosed his volition; for if the thin disciplined lips moved in obedience to constituted authorities, men who knew how to read the meaning of his brow, and the light which kindled beneath, would gather that the Ambassador's thought concerning the Home Governments of the five great Powers of Europe was little else than an angry 'quos ego!' The sagacious Turks would look more to these great signs than to the tenor of formal advice sent out from London, and if they saw that Lord Stratford was in his heart against the opinion of Europe, they would easily resolve to follow his known desire, and to disobey his mere words. The result was that, without any signs of painful doubt, the Turkish Government determined to stand firm. They quietly introduced into the draft the modifications which they deemed to be necessary for extracting its dangerous quality, and resolved that, unless these changes were admitted, they would altogether reject the Note. They were supported by the unanimous decision of the Great Council.

The Turkish Government determines to reject it unless altered.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 69.

It might seem that, with Lord Stratford and the Turkish Government on one side, and all the rest of Europe, including England herself, on the other, the preponderance would be soon determined; and Lord Clarendon remonstrated against the obstinacy of the Turks in terms which approached to a disapproval of all that had lately been done at Constantinople;* but Europe was in the wrong, and Lord Stratford and the Turks were in the right; and happily for the world, a strong man and a good cause make a formidable conjunction. Lord Stratford did not fail to show his Government that the objections of the Turks to the proposed Note were well founded; and Europe was compelled to remember that the Russian demand still had in it the original vice of wrongfully seeking to extort a treaty in time of peace.

Lord Stratford and the Turks stand alone in Europe.

On the 19th of August the Porte declined to accept the Vienna Note, without introducing into it the required alterations.† These alterations were rejected by Russia; and for a moment Europe was threatened with the mortification of seeing that the question of peace or war was to depend upon a mere verbal criticism—and a criticism, too, in which the English Government at first supposed that the Turks were wrong.‡ It happened, however, that in the course of the discussion, Count Nesselrode argued

They are firm.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 91.

† Ibid. p. 80. A copy of the 'Vienna Note,' and of the alterations insisted upon by the Turks, is given in the Appendix, in order to show the exact difference of words which brought about the final rupture between Russia and the Porte.

‡ Ibid. p. 91.

CHAP. XVII.

against the alterations proposed at Constantinople, in language which avowed that the meaning and intent of Russia coincided with that very interpretation which had been fastened upon the Note by the sagacity of the Turks; and the Governments of the four Powers being then obliged to acknowledge that they were wrong, and that Lord Stratford and the Turks were right, the question which brought about the final rupture between Russia and the Porte was virtually the same as that which had caused the departure of Prince Mentschikoff from Constantinople. What Russia still required, and what the Porte still refused to grant, was the Protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey.

Nesselrode uses language which shows the soundness of Lord Stratford's objection to the Note.

The Protectorate of the Greek Church in Turkey was still the thing in question.

At length, with the advice of a Great Council attended by a hundred and seventy-two of the foremost men of the Empire, the Porte determined upon war. A declaration was issued, which made the further continuance of peace dependent upon the evacuation of the Principalities; and the Russian General there commanding was summoned to withdraw his troops from the invaded provinces within fifteen days. He did not comply with the demand; and on the 23d of October 1853 the Sultan was placed in a state of war with the Emperor of Russia.

The Porte declares war.

But meanwhile the preachers of the Orthodox Church and the preachers of Islam had not been idle. In Russia, the piety and the spirit of the people had been forestalled by the consuming evil of a vast standing army, and crushed down by police and by drill. The Government had already taken

Warlike spirit of the belligerents. In Russia this had been forestalled.

so much by sheer compulsion, that the people, however brave and pious, had little more that it was willing to offer up in sacrifice. It was not thus in the Ottoman Empire. Through the vast and scattered dominions of the Sultan, the holy war had not been preached in vain. There, religion and love of country and warlike ardour were blent into one ennobling sentiment, which was strong enough, as was soon shown, to make men arise of their own free will and endure long toil and cruel hardships that they might attain to some battle-field or siege, and there face death with joy. And under the counsels and ascendancy of Lord Stratford this ardour was so well guided that it was kept from breaking out in vain tumult or outrage, and was brought to bear in all its might upon the defence of the State. 'A spirit of self-devotion,' wrote the Ambassador, 'unaccompanied with fanatical demonstrations, and showing itself amongst the highest functionaries of the State, bids fair to give an extraordinary impulse to any military enterprise which may be undertaken against Russia by the Turkish Government. The corps of Ulema are preparing to advance a considerable sum in support of the war. The Grand Vizier, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and other leading members of the Administration, have resigned a large proportion of their horses for the service of the artillery. Reinforcements continue to be directed towards the Danube and the Georgian frontier. If hostilities commence, they will be prosecuted in a manner to leave, on one side or on the

Warlike ardour of the people in the Ottoman Empire.

CHAP. XVII.

'other, deep and durable traces of a truly national 'struggle.'*

Moderation of the Turkish Government.

But if the Turkish Empire was still the Caliphate, and if religion still gave the watchword which brought many races of men to crowd to the same standard, yet the Porte, chastened by the adversity of the latter century, and disciplined by the English Ambassador, had become so wise and politic that it governed the beating heart of the nation, and suffered no fanatic words to go out into Christendom. The duty of the Moslem, now called to arms for his Faith, was preached with a fervour sufficing for all military purposes; but the Proclamation which announced that the Sultan was at war abstained from all fierce theology. Reiterating the poignant truths which placed the Porte in the right and the Czar in the wrong, it kept to that tone of moderation which had hitherto marked all the State Papers of the Turkish Government. But this very moderation seemed always to kindle fresh rage in the mind of the Emperor Nicholas, and to fetch out his religious zeal. The reason perhaps was, that in all wisdom and all moderation evinced by the Divan he persisted in seeing the evil hand of Lord Stratford. In his Proclamation he ascended to ecstatic heights:—'By the grace of God, We, 'Nicholas I., Emperor and Autocrat of All the 'Russias, make known: By our Manifesto of the '14th of June, we acquainted our well-beloved and 'faithful subjects with the motives which have com-

Its effect on the mind of the Czar.

The Czar's Proclamation.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 167.

CHAP. XVII.

'pelled us to demand of the Ottoman Porte inviolable 'guarantees in favour of the sacred rights of the 'Orthodox Church. . . . Russia is challenged to the 'fight; nothing, therefore, further remains for her but, 'in confident reliance upon God, to have recourse to 'arms, in order to compel the Ottoman Government 'to respect treaties, and obtain from it reparation for 'the offences by which it has responded to our most 'moderate demands, and to our legitimate solicitude 'for the defence of the Orthodox faith in the East, 'which is equally professed by the Russian people. 'We are firmly convinced that our faithful subjects 'will join the fervent prayers which we address to 'the Most High, that His hand may be pleased to 'bless our arms in the holy and just cause which has 'ever found ardent defenders in our pious ancestors. '"In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted; let me not be '"confounded for ever!"'*

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 228.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Czar announces that unless he shall be further provoked, he will be content to hold his 'material 'guaran- 'tee,' and refrain from taking the offensive.

THE Emperor Nicholas still sought to prolong the ambiguity of his relations with Turkey. On the 31st of October, Count Nesselrode issued a Circular to the representatives of Russia at foreign Courts, in which he declared that, notwithstanding the declaration of war, and as long as his master's dignity and his interests would permit, Russia would abstain from taking the offensive, and content herself with holding her position in the Principalities until she succeeded in obtaining the satisfaction which she required. This second endeavour to contrive a novel kind of standing-ground between real peace and avowed war was destined, as will be seen, to cause fresh discord between Russia and the Western Powers.

The negotiations are continued, and are ripening towards a settlement, when they are ruined by the Western Powers.

The negotiations for a settlement were scarcely interrupted, either by the formal declaration of war, or by the hostilities which were commenced on the banks of the Danube; and the Conference of the four Powers represented at Vienna had just agreed to the terms of a collective Note, which seemed to afford a basis for peace, when the English Government gave way to the strenuous urgency of the

French Emperor, and consented to a measure which ruined the pending negotiations, and generated a series of events leading straight to a war between Russia and the Western Powers.

In the month of September, some weeks before the Sultan's final rupture with the Czar, the pious and warlike ardour then kindled in the Turkish Empire had begun to show itself at Constantinople. A placard, urging the Government to declare war, was pasted on one of the mosques. Then a petition for war was presented to the Council, and to the Sultan himself, by certain muderris, or theological students. The paper was signed by thirty-five persons of no individual distinction, but having the corporate importance of belonging to the 'Ulemah.' Though free from menace, the petition, as Lord Stratford expressed it, was worded in 'serious and impressive 'terms, implying a strong sense of religious duty, and 'a very independent disregard of consequences.' The Ministers professed to be alarmed, and to believe that this movement was the forerunner of revolution; and Lord Stratford seems to have imagined that their alarm was genuine. It is perhaps more likely that they were skilfully making the most of these occurrences, with a view to embroil their maritime allies in the approaching war; for when they went to the Ambassadors, and asked them to take part in measures for the maintenance of public tranquillity, their meaning was that they wished to see the fleets of France and England come up into the Bosphorus; and they well knew that if this naval

Movement at Constantinople.

The use made of this by the Turkish Ministers.

CHAP. XVIII.

movement could be brought to pass before the day of the final rupture between Russia and the Porte, it would be regarded by the Czar as a flagrant violation of treaty.

A curious indication of the sagacity with which the Turkish Ministers were acting is to be found in the difference between their language to the English Ambassador and their language to M. de la Cour. In speaking to Lord Stratford, they shadowed out dangers impending over the Eastern world, the upheaving of Islam, the overthrow of the Sultan's authority. Then they went straight to M. de la Cour and drew a small vivid picture of massacred Frenchmen. They did not, said M. de la Cour, conceal from him 'that the persons and the interests 'of his countrymen would be exposed to grave dan-'gers, which they were sensible they were incapable 'of preventing, by reason of the want of union in 'the Ministry and the threats directed against them-'selves.'* This skilful discrimination on the part of the Turkish Ministers seems to show that they had not at all lost their composure.

They succeed in alarming the French Ambassador.

Either by their real dread, or by their crafty simulation of it, the Turkish statesmen succeeded in infecting M. de la Cour with sincere alarm. He was easily brought to the conclusion that 'the state of 'the Turkish Government was getting worse and 'worse; and that matters had got to such a state as 'to cause dread of a catastrophe, of which the in-'habitants, Rayahs or Europeans, would be the first

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 115.

'victims, and which would even threaten the Sultan's 'throne.'* He called upon the English Ambassador to consult as to what was best to be done; and both he and the Austrian Internuncio expressed their readiness to join with him in adopting the needful measures.

Composure of Lord Stratford.

Lord Stratford does not seem to have suspected that the use which the Turkish Ministers were making of their divinity students was in the nature of a stratagem; but, assuming and believing their alarm to be genuine, he was still proof against the infection, and retained his calm. Indeed, he seems to have understood that a cry for war on the part of the religious authorities was a healthy sign for the Empire. He expressed to his colleagues his readiness to act in concert with them; but he said he was reluctant to take any step which was not clearly warranted by the necessities of the case, and that he desired to guard against mistake and exaggeration by gaining a more precise knowledge of the grounds for alarm. He deprecated any joint interference with the Turkish Government, and was still less inclined to join in bringing up the squadrons to Constantinople without more proofs of urgent peril than had been yet obtained; but he suggested, as an opinion of his own, that the representatives of the maritime Powers should obtain from their respective Admirals such an addition of steam-force as would secure them from any immediate attack, and enable them to assist the Government in case of an out-

His wise and guarded measures for preserving the peace of the capital.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 115.

CHAP. XVIII.

break threatening its existence, without attracting any unusual attention, or assuming an air of intimidation.* This was done.† A couple of steamers belonging to each of the great Western Powers quietly came up to Constantinople. Tranquillity followed. Every good end was attained without ostentation or disturbance—without the evil of seeming to place the Sultan's capital under the protection of foreign Powers—and, above all, without breaking through the treaty of 1841 in a way which, however justifiable it might be in point of international law, clearly tended to force on a war.

The French Emperor. His means of putting a pressure upon the English Cabinet.

But the moderate and guarded policy of Lord Stratford at Constantinople was quickly subverted by a pressure which the French Emperor found means of putting upon the advisers of the Queen. Of course an understanding with a foreign Power is in its nature an abatement of a nation's free agency; and a statesman may be honest and wise in consenting to measures which have no other excuse than that they were adopted for the sake of maintaining close union with an ally. England had contracted a virtual alliance; and when once she had taken this step, it was needful and right that she should do and suffer many things rather than allow the new friendship to be chilled. But this yoke was pressed hard against her. It was not the wont of England to be causelessly led into an action

* The steam-force of the maritime Powers already in the Golden Horn consisted of vessels which had passed the Dardanelles by virtue of exceptions contained in the treaty of 1841.

† 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 121.

which was violent, and provoking of violence. It was not her wont to rush forward without need, and so to drive through a treaty that many might say she broke it. It was not her wont to be governed in the use of her fleets by the will of a foreign Sovereign. It was not her wont to hear from a French Ambassador that a given movement of her Mediterranean squadron was 'indispensably neces-'sary,' nor to be requested to go to such a conclusion by 'an immediate decision.' It was not her wont to act with impassioned haste, where haste was dangerous and needless. It was not her wont to found a breach with one of the foremost Powers of Europe upon a mere hysterical message addressed by one Frenchman to another. But the French Emperor had a great ascendant over the English Government; for the power which he had gained by entangling it in a virtual alliance was augmented by the growing desire for action now evinced by the English people. He knew that at any moment he could expose Lord Aberdeen and his colleagues to a gust of popular disfavour, by causing it to be known or imagined that France was keen, and that England was lagging behind.

When M. de la Cour's account of his sensations reached Paris, it produced so deep an impression that the French Emperor, either feeling genuine alarm, or else seeing in his Ambassador's narrative an opportunity for the furtherance of his designs, determined to insist, in cogent terms, that the English Government should join him in overstepping the

CHAP. XVIII.

treaty of 1841, and ordering the Allied squadrons to pass the Dardanelles and anchor in the Bosphorus.

Violent urgency of the French Emperor for an advance of the fleets to Constantinople.

On the 23d of September, Count Walewski had an interview with Lord Aberdeen and Lord Clarendon at the same time; and then, after speaking of the crisis at Constantinople which M. de la Cour's despatch had led the French Government to expect, he said that his Government thought it 'indispensably 'necessary that both fleets should be ordered up to 'Constantinople;' and his Excellency added 'that he 'was directed to ask for the immediate decision of 'Her Majesty's Government, in order that no time 'might be lost in sending instructions to the Ambas-'sadors and Admirals.'*

Needlessness of the measure.

Now, at the time of listening to these peremptory words, the English Government had received no account from their own Ambassador of the apprehended disturbances; but they knew that the fleets at the mouth of the Dardanelles, being already under orders to obey the requisitions of the Ambassadors, could be instantly brought up to Constantinople without any further orders for that purpose being sent from home. Moreover, the very despatch which brought the alarm showed that the Ambassadors knew how to meet the danger, and that they had already called up that portion of the fleet which they deemed it prudent to have in the Golden Horn. From first to last the power which France and England had intrusted to their representatives at the Porte had been used with admirable prudence; and

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 114.

it is hard to understand how it could have seemed right to withdraw, or rather supersede, the discretion hitherto committed to the Ambassadors, by sending out an absolute order for the advance of the fleets. As it stood, the fleets would go up the moment they were wanted; and what the French Emperor now required was that, whether they were wanted or not, and in defiance of the treaty of 1841, they should immediately pass the Dardanelles. Either the Queen's Government had lost its composure, or else, when they gave way to this demand of the French Emperor, and consented to a needless * measure which operated as a sharp provocative of war, the Queen's Government went through the bitter duty of taking a step not right in itself, but forced upon them by the stringency of the new alliance.

Its tendency to bring on war.

'I told Count Walewski,' says Lord Clarendon, 'that no intelligence of the nature referred to by 'M. de la Cour had been received from Lord Stratford 'de Redcliffe; and that so long as the Porte did not 'declare war against Russia, and desire the presence 'of the British fleet, it was the intention of Her 'Majesty's Government to observe the treaty of '1841; but Lord Aberdeen and I concurred in stating to Count Walewski that, under such circumstances as those reported by M. de la Cour, the provisions of any treaty must necessarily, and as a 'matter of course, be set aside.' And then, unhappily,

* Needless, because the authority to call up the fleets when they were wanted was already vested in the Ambassadors.

CHAP. XVIII.

The English Government yields to the French Emperor.

Lord Aberdeen and Lord Clarendon went on to tell Count Walewski 'that they would without hesitation 'take upon themselves to agree to the proposal of 'the French Government that the Ambassadors 'should be instructed to call up the fleets to Con-'stantinople for the security of British and French 'interests, and, if necessary, for the protection of the 'Sultan.'*

Fleet ordered up to Constantinople.

In compliance with the promise thus obtained from him, Lord Clarendon on the same day addressed a despatch to Lord Stratford, saying, 'Your Excel-'lency is therefore instructed to send for the Brit-'ish fleet to Constantinople'†—thus depriving the Ambassador of the discretion which had hitherto been used with singular care and wisdom, and with great advantage to the public service. What makes the course of the English Government the more extraordinary is, that they rushed into the hostile policy which is involved in this stringent order to Lord Stratford without having received any despatch of their own from Constantinople, and without any knowledge of the events which had been there occurring except what was conveyed by a telegraphic message from a French Ambassador to his own Government. If the English Ministers had paused five days,‡ they would have received Lord Stratford's calm despatch, showing that he looked with more pleasure than alarm upon the petition of the theological students, and that he knew how to avail

Want of firmness and discretion evinced in the adoption of the measure.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 114. † Ibid. p. 116.

‡ *i. e.*, till 28th September. Ibid. p. 121.

himself of force without using violence. If they had waited four days more,* they would have found that the hour was at hand when the fleets might enter the Dardanelles without any violation or seeming violation of treaty; and, in fact, it happened that this ill-omened order for the entry of the squadrons into the Dardanelles was carried into effect at a moment when a delay of less than twenty-four hours would have made their entry clearly consistent with a due observance of the treaty of 1841; for they entered the Dardanelles on the 22d, and on the following day the Sultan, being then at war with Russia, was released from the engagement which precluded him (so long as he was at peace) from suffering foreign fleets to come up through the Straits.

Baron Brunnow's remonstrance.

Baron Brunnow remonstrated in strong terms against the entry of the fleets into the Dardanelles as a breach of the treaty of 1841; and although he was well answered by Lord Clarendon so far as concerned the mere question of right, no endeavour was made to mitigate by words the true import of the measure; and, in truth, it was of so hostile a nature as not to be susceptible of any favourable interpretation; for although the apprehension of disturbances at Constantinople might be a sufficing ground for the step, the order to the Ambassadors was not made dependent upon the occurrence of any such disturbances, nor even upon any alleged fear of them, but was peremptory and absolute in its terms, and was made applicable, not to such a portion of the naval

* *i.e.*, till 2d October. 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 127.

CHAP. XVIII.

forces as might be requisite for insuring the peace of the city, but to the whole of the Allied squadrons.

Effect of the measure at St Petersburg.

When the tidings of this hostile measure reached St Petersburg, they put an end for the time to all prospect of peace; and even Count Nesselrode, who had hitherto done all he could venture in the way of resistance to his master, now declared with sorrow that he saw in the acts of the British Government a 'settled purpose to humiliate Russia.' He spoke in sorrow; and his thoughts, it would seem, went back to the times when he had sat in great councils with Wellington. 'He spoke,' says Sir Hamilton Seymour, 'with much feeling of the horrors of war, and 'particularly of war between two powerful countries '—two old allies like England and Russia—countries 'which, whilst they might be of infinite use to one 'another, possessed each the means of inflicting great 'injury upon its antagonist; and ended by saying 'that if, for any motives known to him, war should 'be declared against Russia by England, it would 'be the most unintelligible and the least justifiable 'war ever undertaken.'*

Count Nesselrode's sorrow.

The Czar's determination to retaliate with his Black Sea fleet.

The Czar received tidings of the hostile decision of the maritime Powers in a spirit which, this time at least, was almost justified by the provocation given. In retaliation for what he would naturally look upon as a bitter affront, and even as a breach of treaty, he determined, it would seem, to have vengeance at sea whilst vengeance at sea was still possible; and it was under the spur of the anger thus kindled that

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 180.

orders for active operations were given to the fleet at Sebastopol.* The vengeance he meditated he could only wreak upon the body of the Turks, for the great offenders of the West were beyond the bounds of his power.

Error of the notion that the disaster of Sinope was a surprise achieved by stealth.

It was long believed in England that the disaster of Sinope was a surprise stealthily contrived by the Emperor Nicholas, and it is certain that the event fell upon the maritime Powers as a sudden shock; but it is not true that concealment was used by Russia. On the contrary, it seems that the attack was preceded by a long-continued ostentation of naval force. In the middle of the month of November, and at a time when the Allied squadrons were anchored in the Bosphorus, the Sebastopol fleet came out, and was ranged in a kind of cordon stretching from north to south across the centre of the Black Sea. So early as the 20th of November the Russian cruisers captured the Medora, a Turkish steamer;† and about the same time they boarded a merchantman, and relieved the captain of a portion of his cargo and of the whole of his cash;‡ and the

Ostentatious publicity of the Russian operations in the Black Sea.

* This conclusion is drawn from dates. The hostile resolution of the Western Powers was known to the Czar a little before the 14th of October, and about the middle of the following month the Black Sea fleet was at sea. If allowance be made for distance and preparation, it will be seen that the sequence of one event upon the other is close enough to warrant the statement contained in the text. In the absence, however, of any knowledge to the contrary, it is fair to suppose that the Czar remembered his promise, and did not sanction any actual attack upon the enemy unless his commanders should be previously apprised that the Turks had commenced active warfare.

† 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 315.

‡ Ibid. p. 316.

CHAP. XVIII.

Russians were so far from entertaining any idea of secrecy or concealment, that they seem to have hailed neutral merchantmen for the purpose of inquiring about the French and English fleets in the Bosphorus, and asking 'exultingly' if the captures which the Russian fleet had effected were known at Constantinople.*

Tidings of an impending attack by the Russian fleet.

Full ten days† before the fatal 30th of November, a Russian force of seven sail and one war-steamer was cruising in sight of Sinope, and hovering over the Turkish squadron which lay there at anchor. An express, despatched from Samsoon by land on the 22d, bore tidings of this to Lord Stratford, and it must have reached him, it would seem, by the 25th or 26th. On Wednesday the 23d, the Commander of the Turkish squadron descried a Russian force of seven sail and two steamers coming down under a north-east wind towards Sinope. The Turkish ships were cleared for action, but after some manœuvring, the Russian force stood out to windward and gained an offing. On the following day six Russian ships of the line, with a brig and two steamers, again made their appearance; and three of them, under easy sail, stood towards the port of Sinope until the evening. 'In fine,' writes the Turkish Commander, 'six sail of the line, a brig, 'and two steamers, are constantly off the port above-'mentioned, and at one time they lie-to, and another

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 315.

† Ibid. So early as the 22d, the appearance of the squadron was described as having occurred 'some days back.'

'they beat about. From six to eight frigates and 'two steamers have been seen off the port of Bartin 'and Amasbre, and this news is certain. Besides, 'the great naval port of the enemy is near. He may 'therefore receive reinforcements, or attack us with 'fire-ships. That being the case, if reinforcements are 'not sent to us, and our position continues the same 'for some time—may God preserve us from them!— 'it may well happen that the Imperial fleet may incur 'disasters.'*

Inaction of the Ambassadors and the Admirals.

The power and habit of concentrating all energy in a single channel of action, was one of the qualities which gave force and grandeur to Lord Stratford in the field of diplomacy, but it also seems to have had the effect of preventing him from casting a glance beyond the range of his profession; and it is curious that, when the exigencies of the time called upon him to perform duties not commonly falling within the sphere of a diplomatist, his mind refused to act. England and France, without the wholesome formality of a treaty, had glided into an engagement to defend 'Constantinople, or any other part of the 'Turkish territory, whether in Europe or in Asia, 'that might be in danger of attack.'† So much of this grave duty as consisted in originating a resolve to put forth the naval strength of the Allies remained committed to the two Ambassadors, but it was of course understood that any plans for active measures would be concerted between them and the Admirals; and since the nature of the duty which

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 313. † Ibid. p. 143.

CHAP. XVIII.

they might be called upon to undertake was known of course to the Admirals, it must be adjudged that it was incumbent upon them, as well as upon the two Ambassadors, to take measures for ascertaining whether the Russians were preparing to operate against the coasts of Turkey. Moreover, the English Ambassador had been instructed by his Government that, 'if the Russian fleet were to come out of Sebas-'topol, the fleets would then, as a matter of course, 'pass through the Bosphorus;'* and, implicitly, this instruction required that measures should be taken for ascertaining whether the Czar's naval forces were in harbour or at sea, for if they were gone to sea, that was an event which (according to the orders from home) was to be the ground of a naval operation.

Yet not only were no measures taken for ascertaining the truth, but the rumours of great naval operations in the Black Sea, and the despatch of the 22d, announcing that the Russian squadron was hovering over Sinope, and even the despatch containing the touching appeal of the Turkish Commander at Sinope, all alike failed to draw men into action. This last despatch was communicated to Lord Stratford on the 29th. Even then an instant advance of the steam squadrons might not have been altogether in vain, for though the attack commenced on the 30th, the Russian fleet did not quit Sinope until the 1st of December. Yet nothing was done. Nothing but actual intelligence of the disaster was cogent enough to lift an anchor. What Lord Strat-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 143.

ford says of the causes of all this inaction ought to be stated in his own words. Writing on the 4th of December, he says: 'Rumours of Russian ships of the 'line being at sea have occasionally prevailed for 'some time. Uncertainty of information, a wish to 'avoid as long as possible the chances of a collision, 'the arrival of a new French Ambassador, and the 'state of the weather, were natural causes of demur 'in coming to a decision as to sending the squadrons 'into the Black Sea at this time of the year.'* But even supposing that there were reasons which justified hesitation in sending the squadrons to sea, the Home Governments of the Western Powers were entitled to ask why some humbler means of ascertaining the truth were never resorted to, and why no measures followed upon the receipt of the alarming despatch from Samsoon, or even upon the appeal for help which had come from the Turkish Commander at Sinope.

The disaster of Sinope.

On the 30th of November, Admiral Nachimoff, with six sail of the line, bore down upon the Turkish squadron still lying at anchor in the port of Sinope. There was no ship of the line in the Turkish squadron. It consisted of seven frigates, a sloop, a steamer, and some transports. The Turks were the first to fire, and to bring upon their little squadron of frigates the broadsides of six sail of the line; and although they fought without hope, they were steadfast. Either they refused to strike their colours, or else, if their colours went down, the Russian Admiral was blind

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 311.

CHAP. XVIII.

to their signal, and continued to slaughter them. Except the steamer, every one of the Turkish vessels was destroyed. It was believed by men in authority that 4000 Turks were killed, that less than 400 survived, and that all these were wounded.* The feeble batteries of the place suffered under the enemy's fire, and the town was much shattered.* The Russian fleet did not move from Sinope until the following day.*

This onslaught upon Sinope, and upon vessels lying in port, was an attack upon Turkish territory, and was therefore an attack which the French and English Ambassadors had been authorised to repel by calling into action the fleets of the Western Powers. Moreover, this attack had been impending for many days, and all this while the fleets of the Western Powers had been lying still in the Bosphorus within easy reach of the scene of the disaster. The honour of France was wounded. England was touched to the quick.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 305.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHAP. XIX.

Chasm in the instructions furnished to the Admirals of the Western Powers.

EITHER from sheer want of forethought, or else in tenderness to the feelings of men who shunned the bare thought of a collision, the Governments of France and England had omitted to consider the plight in which they would stand, if, under the eyes of their naval commanders, a Russian Admiral should come out from Sebastopol and crush a Turkish squadron in the midst of the Black Sea. It is true that this was not the event which had occurred, for the onslaught of Sinope was 'an attack upon Turkish 'territory,' and was therefore within the scope of the instructions from home. But it is also true that the Governments of Paris and London had not committed, either to their Ambassadors or their Admirals, any power to take part in a naval engagement against Russia upon the open sea; and it was obvious that this chasm in the instructions furnished a ground of palliation to the Ambassadors and the naval commanders; for, after all the angry negotiations that had taken place between Russia and the Western Powers, a French or an English Admiral might naturally be loth to go watching the movements of a fleet which,

CHAP. XIX.

so long as it was upon the open sea, he was not empowered to strike, and might be honourably reluctant to move out into the Euxine and run the risk of having to witness a naval engagement between the ships of the Czar and of the Sultan, without being at liberty to take part in it unless it chanced to be fought within gunshot of the Turkish coast. But exactly in proportion as this excuse for the Ambassadors and Admirals was valid, it tended to bring blame upon the Home Governments of France and England. The honest rage of the English people was about to break out, and there were materials for a rough criticism of men engaged in the service of the State. Some might blame the Home Government, some the Ambassador, some the Admiral; but plainly it would fare ill with any man upon whom the public anger might light.

In proportion as this would palliate the inaction of the Admirals, it would tend to bring blame upon the Home Government.

On the 11th of December the tidings of Sinope reached Paris and London. The French Government felt the bitterness of a disaster 'endured as it 'were under the guns of the French and English 'fleets.'* In England the indignation of the people ran to a height importing a resolve to have vengeance; and if it had clearly been understood that the disaster had resulted from a want of firm orders from home, the Government would have been overwhelmed. But the very weight and force of the public anger gave the Government a means of eluding it. The torrent had so great a volume that it was worthy to be turned against a foreign State.

Reception of the tidings of Sinope by the French Government, and by the people in England.

* M. Drouyn de Lhuys. 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 299.

CHAP. XIX.

The blaming of Ministers and Ambassadors and Admirals, and the endless conflict which would be engendered by the apportionment of censure, all might be superseded by suggesting, instead, a demand for vengeance against Russia. The terms of Count Nesselrode's Circular of the 31st of October* had given ground for expecting that, until provoked to a contrary course, the Czar, notwithstanding the Turkish declaration of war, would remain upon the defensive; and the people in England were now taught, or allowed to suppose, that Russia had made this attack upon a Turkish squadron in breach of an honourable understanding virtually equivalent to a truce, or, at all events, to an arrangement which would confine the theatre of active war to the valley of the Lower Danube. This charge against Russia was unjust; for after the issue of the Circular, the Government of St Petersburg had received intelligence not only that active warfare was going on in the valley of the Lower Danube, but that the Turks had seized the Russian fort of St Nicholas, on the eastern coast of the Euxine, and were attacking Russia upon her Armenian frontier. After acts of this warlike sort had been done, it was impossible to say, with any fairness, that Russia was debarred from a right to destroy her enemy's ships; and it must be acknowledged also, as I have already said, that the destruction of the Turkish squadron at Sinope was not a thing done in stealth. But the people of England, not knowing all this at first, and hearing nothing

The anger of the English people is diverted from official personages and brought to bear on the Czar.

An unjust charge against the Czar gains full belief in England.

* See *ante*.

CHAP. XIX.

of the Russian fleet until they heard of the ravage and slaughter of Sinope, imagined that the blow had come sudden as the knife of an assassin. They were too angry to be able to look upon the question in a spirit of cold justice. It was therefore an easy task to turn all attention from the faults of public functionaries and fasten it upon a larger scheme of vengeance. Ministers, Ambassadors, and Admirals, went free, and in a spirit of honest, inaccurate justice, the Emperor Nicholas was marked for sacrifice. This time it was his fate to be condemned on wrong grounds; but his sins against Europe had been grievous, and the rough dispensations of the tribunal which people call 'opinion' have often enough determined that a man who has been guilty of one crime shall be made to suffer for another. There were few men in England who doubted that the onslaught of Sinope was a treacherous deed.

First decision of the English Cabinet in regard to Sinope.

When the Cabinet met to consult upon the questions raised by the tidings from Sinope, it came to the conclusion that the fleets of the Western Powers would forthwith enter the Euxine; and the majority were of opinion that the instructions addressed to the English Admiral on the 8th of October, reinforced by a warning that such a disaster as Sinope must not be repeated, would be still a sufficing guide. But Lord Palmerston saw that, even if this resolution was suited to the condition of things on the shores of the Bosphorus, it would find no mercy at home. In truth he was gifted with the instinct which enables a man to read the heart of a

Lord Palmerston resigns office.

nation. He saw, he felt, he knew that the English people would never endure to hear of the disaster of Sinope, and yet be told that nothing was done. He resigned his office. The residuum of the Cabinet determined to leave the English Admiral under the guidance of his own instructions.

Proposal of the French Emperor.

But on the 16th of December the Emperor of the French once more approached the Government of the Queen with his subtle and dangerous counsels. The armed conflict of States in these times is an evil of such dread proportions that it seems wise to uphold the solemnity of a transition from peace to war, and to avoid those contrivances which tend to throw down the great landmark; for experience shows that statesmen heartily resolved upon peace may nevertheless be induced to concur in a series of gentle steps which slowly and gradually lead down to war. The negotiations for a settlement between Russia and Turkey had not only been revived, but were far from being at this time in an unpromising state; and it is probable that if Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone had been called upon to say whether they would observe peace faithfully, or frankly declare a war, they would scarcely have made the more violent choice. But the alternative was not presented to the minds of the Queen's Ministers in this plain and wholesome form.

Danger of breaking down the old barriers between peace and war.

Ambiguous character of the proposal.

The ingenious Emperor of the French devised a scheme of action so ambiguous in its nature that, at the option of any man who spoke about it, it might be called either peace or war, but so certain

CHAP. XIX.

nevertheless, in its tendency, that the adoption of it by the maritime Powers would blot out all fair prospect of maintaining peace in Europe. He proposed to give Russia notice 'that France and England were resolved to prevent the repetition of the 'affair of Sinope, and that every Russian ship thence-'forward met in the Euxine would be requested, and, 'if necessary, constrained, to return to Sebastopol; 'and that any act of aggression afterwards attempted 'against the Ottoman territory or flag would be re-'pelled by force.'* This proposal involved, without expressing it, a defensive alliance with Turkey against Russia; and, if it were adopted, the Emperor of Russia would have to see his flag driven from the waters which bounded his own dominions. It was so framed that Lord Palmerston would know it meant war, whilst Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone might be led to imagine that it was a measure rather gentle than otherwise, which perhaps would keep peace in the Euxine. Indeed, the proposal seemed made to win the Chancellor of the Exchequer; for it fell short of war by a measure of distance which, though it might seem very small to people with common eyesight, was more than broad enough to afford commodious standing-room to a man delighting as he did in refinements and slender distinctions.

The French Emperor presses upon the English Cabinet.

The Emperor of the French pressed this scheme upon the English Cabinet with his whole force. He not only urged it by means of the usual channels

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 307.

of diplomatic communication, but privately desired Lord Cowley 'to recommend it in the strongest 'terms to the favourable attention of Her Majesty's 'Government as a measure incumbent upon himself 'and them to take;' and he avowed 'the disappoint-'ment which he should feel if a difference of 'opinion prevented its adoption.'* This language is cogent—it is also significant; and, to one who can read it by the light of a little collateral knowledge, it may open a glimpse of the relations subsisting between the French Court and public men in England.

On the 17th the English Government had taken a step in pursuance of the decision to which the majority of the Cabinet had come; but on the following day they were made acquainted with the will of the French Emperor. It would seem that there was a struggle in the Cabinet; but by the 24th all resistance had broken down, and the first decision of the Government was overturned. The proposal of the French Emperor closed in like a net round the variegated group which composed Lord Aberdeen's Ministry, and gathered them all together in its supple folds. Some submitted to it for one reason, and some for another; but the pressure of the French Emperor was the cogent motive which governed the result. Still, this time, though the pressure was inflicted by the hand of a foreign sovereign, it was after all from the English people themselves that the French Emperor drew his strongest means of coer-

Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet yields, and adopts, with a slight addition, the French Emperor's scheme.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 307.

CHAP. XIX.

cion. Their indignation at the disaster of Sinope made him sure that he could bring ruin on Lord Aberdeen's Administration by merely causing England to know that her Government was shrinking from the hostile scheme of action which he had proposed.

The result, however, was that now, for the second time, France dictated to England the use that she should make of her fleet, and by this time perhaps submission had become more easy than it was at first. The Ministry, with much openness, acknowledged that they were acting without the warrant of their own judgment, and in deference to the will of the French Emperor. 'The Government,' said Lord Clarendon, 'having announced that the recurrence of 'a disaster such as that at Sinope must be prevented, 'and that the command of the Black Sea must be 'secured, would have been content to have left the 'manner of executing those instructions to the dis-'cretion of the Admirals, but they attach so much 'importance not alone to the united action of the 'two Governments, but to the instructions addressed 'to their respective agents being precisely the same, 'that they are prepared to adopt the specific mode of 'action now proposed by the Government of the 'Emperor.'* This being resolved, Lord Palmerston consented to return to office.† With the ad-

Lord Palmerston withdraws his resignation.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 321.

† His secession during these ten or twelve days was afterwards stated by him to have been based upon a question of home politics, but it would not, of course, follow from this statement that no other motives were governing him; and when it is remembered that his resignation

CHAP. XIX.

dition of a proviso that for the present the Sultan should be engaged to abstain from aggressive operations on the Euxine, instructions exactly in accord with the French Emperor's proposal were forthwith sent out to the Bosphorus, and at the same time the French and English representatives at St Petersburg were ordered to communicate this resolution to Count Nesselrode.

Orders to execute the scheme and to announce it at St Petersburg.

was simultaneous with the first resolution of the Cabinet, and that his return to office coincided with the Cabinet's adoption of the French Emperor's scheme, it will hardly be questioned that the four events may be fairly enough placed in an order which suggests the relation of cause and effect.

CHAPTER XX.

CHAP. XX.

Terms of settlement agreed to by the four Powers, and forced upon the acceptance of the Turks by Lord Stratford.

After much labour, the representatives of the four Powers at Constantinople had agreed upon a scheme of settlement which they deemed likely to be acceptable to the Emperor Nicholas, and they pressed its adoption by the Porte. The warlike spirit of the Ottoman people had been rising day by day, and it became very hard and dangerous for the Government to venture upon entertaining a negotiation for peace. But Lord Stratford had power over the minds of Turkish Statesmen; and he exerted it with so great a force that, although it was now impossible for them to obey him without having to face a religious insurrection, they obeyed him nevertheless. The fury of the armed divines, insisting upon the massacre of worldlings, was less terrible to them than the anger of the Eltchi. To his will they bent. Not only the Turkish Cabinet, but even the Great Council of State, was brought to accept the terms proposed.* The difficulty, nay the peril of life, which had thus been encountered by the Turkish Ministry for the sake of

Grounds for expecting an amicable solution.

* The terms were finally accepted on the 31st of December 1853. 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 362.

CHAP. XX.

making peace with Russia—the success achieved at Sinope—and some victories gained over the Turks on the Armenian frontier,—all these were circumstances tending to assuage the mortification inflicted upon the Czar by the failure of Prince Mentschikoff's mission. Again, it had long been plain that the time was ill-fitted for the promotion of any scheme of Russian ambition; and it was known that the English Ambassador had brought the Turks to the utmost verge of possible concession. Moreover, terms of arrangement, agreed to by the Turkish Government, were about to be pressed upon the Czar with all the authority of the four great Powers. It might seem, therefore, that all things were conducing towards an amicable settlement. Nor was this hope at all shaken when the Government of St Petersburg was made acquainted with the first and unbiassed decision to which the English Government had come after hearing of the disasters of Sinope. Apprised by his private letters of the tenor of this decision, Sir Hamilton Seymour gathered or inferred that the Admirals of the Western Powers, being enjoined to prevent the recurrence of an attack like the attack of Sinope, would assert the command of the Black Sea; and when he imparted to the Russian Government the impression thus produced on his mind, his communication was received in a wise and friendly spirit by Count Nesselrode; for after hearing that the Western Powers would be likely to assume the command of the Black Sea, the Count 'expressed his belief 'that the Russian fleet would, in consequence of the

Friendly reception by the Russian Government of the news of the first decision of the English Cabinet.

CHAP. XX.

'advanced season, be little likely to leave Sebastopol;' and he then went on to suggest that, if the Russians were to be hindered from attacking the Turks, it would be fair that the Turks should be restrained from molesting the coast of Russia. The rest of the conversation related to the pending negotiations; and, upon the whole, it was plain that the first decision of the English Cabinet was looked upon as the natural result of the engagement at Sinope, that it would certainly not lead to a rupture,* and that at length the Russian Government was in a fit temper to receive the proposals for peace which the four Powers (with the concurrence this time of Lord Stratford, and with the extorted assent of the Turks) were now again bringing to St Petersburg. But whilst this fair prospect was opened by the unceasing toil of the negotiators, there were messengers then journeying from Paris and from London to the Court of St Petersburg; and they carried an announcement that the Western Powers were resolved to execute the harsh and insulting scheme of action which had been forced upon the acceptance of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet by the Emperor of the French. Of course it was not be expected that the friendly spirit in which the Russian Government had received the first and unbiassed decision of the English Cabinet would even for one moment survive an announcement of the scheme which only some ten days later our Government had been brought to adopt. It was one thing for the Western Powers

Announcement at St Petersburg of the scheme finally adopted by the Western Powers.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 359.

to enforce the neutrality of the Black Sea, and another and a very different thing to announce to the sovereign of a haughty State that, even although he might be bent on no warlike errand, still, upon the very sea which washed his coast—upon the very sea which filled his harbours—he was forbidden to show his flag.

On the 12th of January 1854, the Emperor Nicholas was forced to hear—to endure to hear—that, upon peril of an unequal conflict with the combined fleets of the Western Powers, every ship that he had in the Euxine must either be kept from going to sea, or else must sail by stealth, and be liable to be ignominiously driven back into port. The negotiation, which had seemed to be almost ripe for a settlement, was then ruined. The Emperor Nicholas did not declare war against the Western Powers; but, as soon as he received the hostile announcement in a form which he deemed to be official, he withdrew his representatives from Paris and London. The Governments of France and England followed his example; and on the 21st of February 1854, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the Western Powers were brought to a close. Moreover, the Czar prepared to undertake an invasion of the Ottoman dominions.

The negotiations are ruined.

Rupture of diplomatic relations.

The Czar prepares to invade Turkey.

On the 4th of January 1854, the fleets of England and France moved up and entered the Euxine.

Fleets enter the Euxine.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHAP. XXI.

Military error of the Czar in occupying Wallachia.

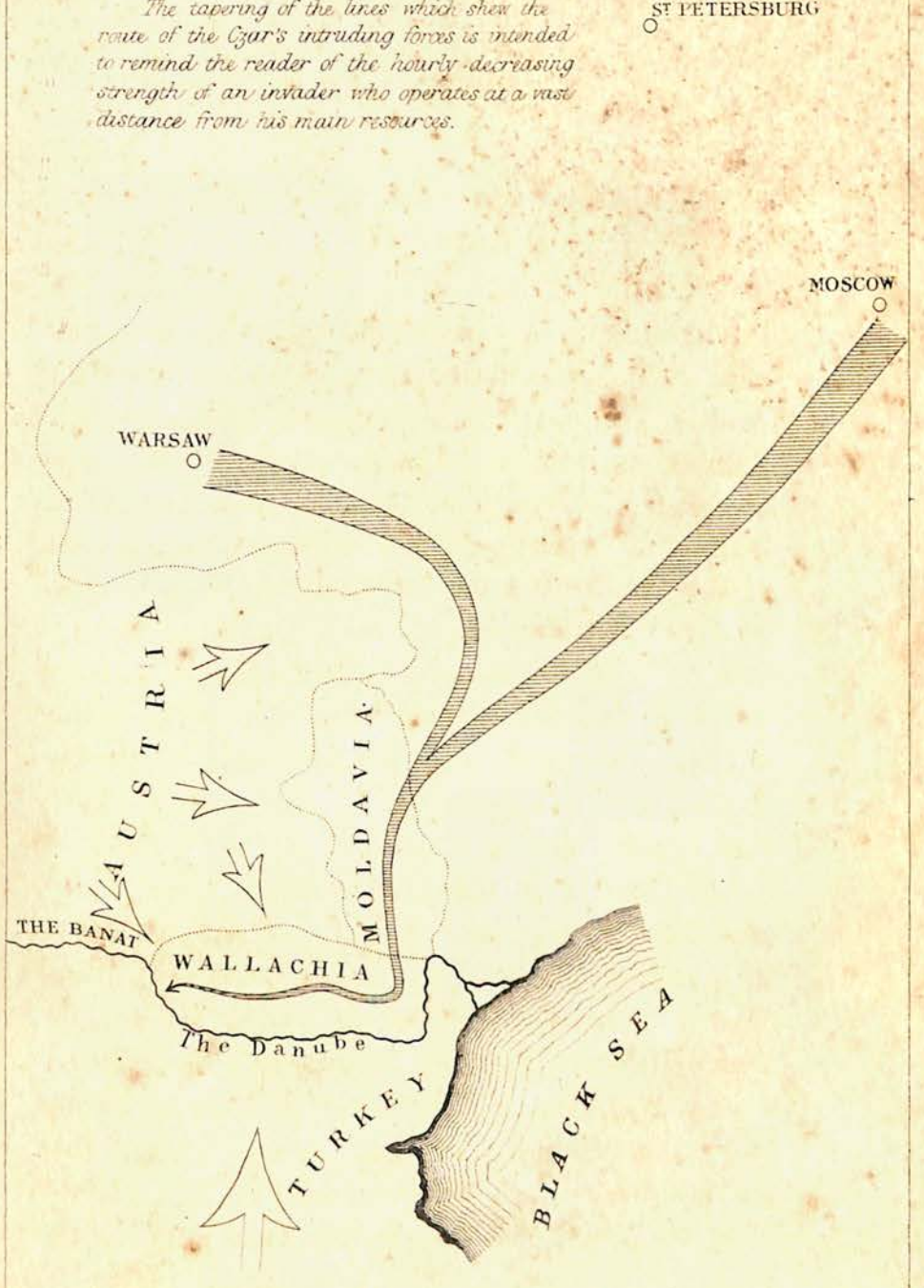
In a military point of view, and upon the supposition of there being no understanding between Russia and Austria, the seizure of the whole of Wallachia by a Russian army is a dangerous measure; for, after reaching Bucharest, the line of occupation has to bend at right angles, ascending the northern bank of the Danube between an enemy expectant and an enemy already declared, till at length it touches the frontier of the Banat, at a distance from Moscow of not less than a thousand miles. To be in fitting strength at a point thus situate would imply the possession of resources beyond those which Russia could command.

Of this Omar Pasha takes skilful advantage.

The General at the head of the Turkish army was Omar Pasha; and it chanced that he was a man highly skilled in the art of bringing political views to bear upon the operations of an army in the field. He knew that, in protruding his forces into Lesser Wallachia, the Emperor Nicholas was committing a military fault; and he also inferred that political reasons and imperial vanity would make the Czar cling to his error. He also knew that, for the

Diagram indicating the nature of the straits in which the Czar placed himself by attempting to maintain a hostile occupation of the Danubian Principalities without the assent of Austria.

The tapering of the lines which shew the route of the Czar's intruding forces is intended to remind the reader of the hourly decreasing strength of an invader who operates at a vast distance from his main resources.



M & N Hanhart Lith

rest of that year, the Czar, being kept back by the engagements which he had taken, by his fear of breaking with the four Powers, and, above all, by the insufficiency of his means, would abstain from any further invasion of Turkey, and would even be reluctant to alarm Europe by allowing the least glimpse of a Russian uniform to appear on the right bank of the Danube. Omar saw that the river had thus become a political barrier which protected the Turks from the Russians, without protecting the Russians from the Turks. He could, therefore, overstep the common rules of the art of war; and, disporting himself as he chose on the line of the Danube, could concentrate forces on his extreme left, without any fear for his centre or his right.

His autumn and winter campaigns.

Therefore, in the early part of the autumn, a large portion of the Turkish army was quietly drawn to Widdin, a town on the right bank of the river, in the westernmost angle of Bulgaria; and, on the fifth day from the declaration of war, Omar Pasha was over the Danube, intrenching himself at Kalafat, and so established that he faced towards the east, and confronted the extreme flank of the intruding army.* From that moment Nicholas ceased to be the undisturbed holder of the territory which he had chosen to call his 'material guarantee.' His pride was touched. Tortured by the thought that his power to hold the pledge was challenged by a Turkish officer, he began to exhaust his strength in efforts to assem-

* 28th October 1853. The declaration of war became absolute on the 23d.

CHAP. XXI.

ble a force at the westernmost point of his extended flank. This was the error which Omar Pasha wished him to commit. At the close of the year, the Czar had succeeded in pushing a heavy body of troops into Lesser Wallachia; and in the beginning of January the lines of Kalafat were attacked by General Aurep. The struggle lasted four days, but it ended in the retreat of the Russian forces; and considering the vast distance between the lines of Kalafat and the home of the Russian army, it may be inferred that this fruitless effort of imperial pride must have worked a deep cavity in the military strength of the Czar.

Moreover, Omar Pasha took another and a not less skilful advantage of the political considerations which prevented the Russians from passing the Danube; for, during the winter, he fleshed his troops by indulging them with enterprises against the enemy's posts along the whole line of the Lower Danube from Widdin to Rassova; and since these attacks were often attended with success, and could never be signally repressed by an enemy who had precluded himself from the right of crossing the river, they gave the Turks that sense of strength in fight which is at the root of warlike prowess.

Embarrassment and distress of the Czar.

Early in the winter the Emperor Nicholas came to understand the fault which he had committed in prescribing the Danube as a boundary—a boundary to be observed by himself, without the least right for expecting that it would be observed by his adversary. So now he would do the contrary of what

he had done. Because he had committed a military fault in forbidding himself from all enterprises against the slowly-assembling forces of the Porte in 1853, he would now, in 1854, undertake an invasion which must bring him into conflict with the gathered strength of the Ottoman Empire, and that, too, when it had become certain that the armed support of France and England would not be wanting to the Sultan. But perhaps, after all, it was hardly tolerable for a haughty monarch to have to stand passive under the insulting coercion which was now to be applied to him by the Western Powers; and the Czar, having no means of hostile action against the territories or the ships of either France or England, could only strike at his greater foes by striking at the ally whom they had undertaken to befriend. Upon the whole, therefore, he could not so school himself as to be able to abstain from attempting an invasion of Turkey; but the wholesome trials which he had now undergone had so far disciplined his spirit that at length, after bitter anguish, he felt and acknowledged to himself the want of a firm adviser.

He resorts for aid to Paskievitch.

Russia owned a great General who had never sanctioned by his counsel the errors of the previous year; and now—baffled—agitated—driven hither and thither by alternating impulses till his brain had become a guide more blind than chance—the Czar abated his personal claims to the conduct of a war, and came for help and counsel to the veteran Paskievitch. The evil was almost beyond the old man's hope of cure; for how could Russia march

CHAP. XXI.

upon Constantinople—nay, how in strict prudence could she march upon the Balkan whilst England and France were in full command of the Euxine? But was the Czar then simply powerless against Turkey? Had his million of soldiers been torn from their homes in vain? Had he not busied himself all his days in organising armies and reviewing drilled men, and grinding down his people into the mere fractional components of an army, until the very faces of soldiers in the same battalion were brought to be similar and uniform? Had his life been utter foolishness, and was the labour of his reign so barren that he could not now make a campaign against the simple Turks, who never took pains about anything until the hour of battle? Had he not spoken in the councils of Europe as though he were a potentate so great that the Empire of the Ottomans existed by force of his magnanimity? And now, had it come to this, that at the mere bidding of the Western Powers, and without their firing a shot, he was to stand arrested in the presence of scoffing Europe like a prisoner who had delivered his sword?

Paskievitch's counsels.

Well, Paskievitch, in a painful, soldierly way, could tell him what would be the least imprudent plan for attacking the inner dominions of the Sultan. The principles of the art of war have a great stability; and although there is an infinite variety in the methods of applying them, it results that the invasion of one nation by another is repeatedly undertaken upon the same accustomed route.

By the route which Paskievitch recommended,

the invader crosses the Danube in the neighbourhood of its great bend towards the north; makes himself master of Silistria; encounters and overcomes the assembled strength of the Ottoman Empire in front of the great intrenched camp of Shoumla; then, advancing, forces the difficult passes of the Balkan as best he may; marches upon Adrianople; and thence on—thence on, if he can and dares—to the shore of the Bosphorus. Erivanski* could hardly have believed that his master's military power was equal to so great an undertaking as that; but if it succeeded only in some of its early stages, diplomacy might come to the rescue of the Czar, as it had done in 1829; and the plan had this in its favour, that it placed a broad tract of country between Austria and the right flank of the invading army, and another though less extended territory between its left flank and the fleets of the Western Powers.

But in the counsels of a wise and faithful soldier there is a pitiless candour—a dreadful precision. He comes in his hard way to weights, and to numbers, and to measurements of space and of time. Without mercy to the vanity of his suffering master, Paskievitch defaced the cherished form of the 'material guarantee,' by insisting that the Czar should cease from trying to hold the Principalities entire, and that all his forces should be quickly withdrawn from the Lesser Wallachia. This done, he promised the

* This was Paskievitch's title: it denoted that he was the conqueror of Erivan, a province conquered from the Persians.

CHAP. XXI.

Czar an invasion of the Ottoman Empire; but the carrying of the enterprise beyond the valley of the Danube was to be only upon condition that Silistria should fall, and should fall before the 1st of May.*

Movement of troops in the Russian Empire.

So now the streams of battalions rumoured to be setting in upon the Lower Danube from the confines of All the Russias woke up the mind of Europe, and portended a great invasion.

* My knowledge of the counsels tendered to the Emperor by Paskievitch is derived from papers in the possession of the late Lord Raglan.

CHAPTER XXII.

CHAP. XXII.

Sir John Burgoyne and Colonel Ardent despatched to the Levant.

It has been seen that without treaty, and without the advice or knowledge of Parliament—nay even, perhaps, without a distinct conception of what it was doing—the English Government had been gradually contracting engagements which were almost equivalent to a defensive alliance with the Sultan. France, by virtue of her new understanding with England, had come under the same obligations; and now that an invasion of the Ottoman Empire was threatened, it became necessary that the Western Powers should take measures for its defence. At first, however, their views were limited to the defence of the Sultan's home territories, and especially those which gave the control of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Two Engineer officers—Colonel Ardent on the part of France, and Sir John Burgoyne on the part of England—were despatched to Turkey, with instructions to report upon the best means of aiding the Sultan to defend his home dominions; and almost at the same time it was agreed between the two Western Powers that each of them should prepare to send a small body of troops into the Levant.

CHAP. XXII.

Troops sent to Malta.

The English force was collected at Malta. Of the Ministers who joined in adopting this measure, some foresaw that the few battalions which they were despatching to the East were the nucleus of an army which might have to operate in the field; but others looked upon them as a force intended to support our negotiations. This ambiguity of motive was a root of evil; for the collateral arrangements which are requisite for enabling an army to live, to move, and to fight, bear a vast proportion to the mere business of collecting the men; and there is always a danger that a body of troops, sent towards the scene of action with a diplomatic intent, will be unsupported by the measures which are requisite for actual war, and yet, upon the rupture of the negotiations, will be prematurely hurried into the field. On the other hand, the councillors of a great military State are so well accustomed to know the cost and the labour which must precede the advance of an army, that the mere protrusion of a body of well-equipped troops, unsupported by the collateral appliances of war, does not tell upon their minds as a proof of an intention to act. By despatching a few battalions to Malta, without instructing Commissaries to go to the Levant and begin buying up the agricultural wealth of the country, we not only subjected our troops to the danger of their being brought into the field before supplies were ready, but also convinced the Russians that we could not be sincerely intending to engage in a war. Moreover, the slenderness of the addition which the Government proposed to make to our army tended

Tendency of this measure.

Ministers determine to propose but a small increase of the army.

to prolong the Czar's fond confidence in the weight and strength of the English Peace Party; and perhaps this dangerous error was strengthened, if Baron Brunnow was able to tell him that, in proposing to the Cabinet a material increase of our land-forces, the Duke of Newcastle stood almost alone.

Continuance of Lord Aberdeen's imprudent language.

The Prime Minister's continued persistency in the use of hurtful language was another of the causes which still helped to keep the Czar blindfold. Lord Aberdeen abhorred the bare thought of war; and he would not have suffered his country to be overtaken by it, if the coming danger had been of such a kind that it could be warded off by hating it and shunning its aspect. But it is not by intemperate hatred of war, nor yet by shunning its aspect, that war is averted. Almost to the last, Lord Aberdeen misguided himself. His loathing of war took such a shape that he could not and would not believe in it; and when at last the spectre was close upon him, he covered his eyes and refused to see. Basing himself upon the thoughtless saying of a statesman, who had laid it down that there could be no war in Europe when France and England were agreed, he seems to have imagined that, although he was suffering himself to be drawn on and on into measures which were always becoming less and less short of war, still he could maintain peace by taking care to be always along with the French Emperor; and he so clung to the paradise created by a false maxim that he could not be torn from it. He would not be roused from a dream which was sweeter

CHAP. XXII.

than all waking thoughts; and even now, to any man to whom he chanced to speak, he continued to say that there could not, there would not be war. Coming from a Prime Minister, such words as these did not fail to have a noxious weight with many who heard them. Baron Brunnow, we have seen, had looked deeper even at a much earlier period, and now again, no doubt, he took care to warn his master that Lord Aberdeen was under a passionate hatred of war which deprived him of his competence to speak in the name of his country: but by other channels the words of our Prime Minister were carried to the Emperor of Russia, and, being very welcome to him, and coinciding with his long cherished notions, they tended to keep him in the perilous belief that Lord Aberdeen was speaking with knowledge, and that England, still clogged by her Peace Party, was unable to go to war.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHAP. XXIII.

The French Emperor's letter to the Czar.

A NEW opportunity of making his way back to peace was now thrown away by the Czar. The exigencies of a throne based upon the deeds of the 2d of December were always driving the French Emperor to endeavour to allay the remembrance of the past by creating a stir in Europe, and endeavouring to win celebrity. When Europe was quiet, he was obliged, for his life's sake, to become its disturber; but when it was at war, or threatened with war, he was willing, it seems, to take an exactly opposite method of attaining the required conspicuousness; for he was not a bloodthirsty nor even a very active-minded man, and there seems no good reason to doubt that, having brought Europe to the state in which it was at the close of January, he was sincere in the pacific step which he then took. At a moment when war was already kindled and seemed to be on the point of involving the great Powers, the odd vanity and the theatric bent which had so strangely governed his life, might easily make him wish to come upon the scene and bestow the blessing of peace upon the grateful, astonished nations. On

CHAP. XXIII.

the other hand, an English Minister would be careless of this kind of celebrity, and, so that peace could be restored to Europe, would be well pleased that the honour of the achievement should seem to belong to the French Emperor.

There is no reason to doubt that the English Government assented to the somewhat startling plan under which the French Emperor conceived himself entitled to speak for the Queen of England as well as for himself; and certainly the licence, however strange it may appear, was in strict consistency with the spirit of the understanding which seems to have been established between the two Western Powers.*

On the 29th of January the French Emperor addressed an autograph letter to his 'good friend' of All the Russias. The letter in many parts of it was ably worded, and moderate in its tone, but it was mainly remarkable for the language in which the French Emperor took upon himself to speak and even to threaten war in the name of the Queen of England. After suggesting a scheme of pacification, he said to the Czar: 'Let your Majesty 'adopt this plan, upon which the Queen of Eng-'land and myself are perfectly agreed, and tran-'quillity will be re-established and the world satisfied. 'There is nothing in the plan which is unworthy 'of your Majesty—nothing which can wound your 'honour; but if, from a motive difficult to under-'stand, your Majesty should refuse this proposal, then

* See the inferred purport of this understanding as stated *ante*, p. 328.

'France as well as England will be compelled to 'leave to the fate of arms and the chances of war 'that which might now be decided by reason and 'justice.'* The French Emperor permitted himself to write this at a time when, so far as is known, no threat like that which he chose to utter in the name of the Queen had been addressed by the English Cabinet to the Court of St Petersburg.

With the feelings which might be expected from them, English Ministers of State have generally been slow to use threatening words; and they have been chary, too, in putting forward the name of their Sovereign. Our Government could not have been willing that England should be thrust upon the attention of the world in a way which the too fastidious Court of St Petersburg would be sure to regard as grotesque. No one can doubt the pain with which the members of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet must have seen the French Emperor come forward upon the stage of Europe, and publicly menace the Emperor of Russia in the name of their Queen. The process by which they were brought to suffer this is unknown to me. What seems probable is, that a draft of the letter was submitted to them, accompanied with significant representations of the importance which the French Emperor attached to it, and that the Cabinet yielded to the pressure because it feared that resistance might chill the new alliance, and might even perhaps cause it to be suddenly abandoned for an alliance between Russia and France.

* 'Annual Register,' 1854.

CHAP. XXIII.

The letter proposed an armistice, in order to leave open a free course for negotiation. It would seem that, in a military point of view, an armistice for a limited period, commencing in the early days of February, could not have been inconvenient to a Sovereign whose main difficulty at that time lay in the immense marches which he had to effect within his own dominions; and, on the other hand, to any one acquainted with the French Emperor's personal weakness, it was obvious that, by a little harmless play upon his vanity, Russia might hope to obtain a great diplomatic advantage, and to effect a decorous escape from her troubles. But the Czar was not politic; and, instead of seizing the proffered occasion, he not only rejected the overture, but aggravated his refusal by an unwise allusion to the French disasters of 1812.

Mission to St Petersburg from the English Peace Party.

In his quest after this sort of fame the French Emperor was not without rivals. We have seen the share which the English Peace Party had had in misleading the Emperor of Russia, and tempting him to become a disturber by withdrawing the wholesome fear which deters a man from venturing upon outrage. Certain brethren of the Society of Friends, who had been prominent members of this Party, now thought it becoming or wise to proceed to St Petersburg and request the Emperor of All the Russias to concur with them in preserving Europe from the calamity of war.

A little later, and the Czar would have stamped in fury and driven from his sight any hapless aide-de-

camp who had come to him with a story about a deputation from the English Peace Party; for the hour was at hand when his curses were about to fall heavy on the men who had led him on into all his troubles by pretending that England was immersed in trade, and resolved to engage in no war.* But at this time his hope of seeing our Government held back by the Peace Party had not altogether vanished, and he resolved to give this strange mission a genial welcome.

Of course, the political conversation between the booted Czar and the men of peace was sheer nothingness; but what followed shows the care with which Nicholas had studied the middle classes of England. When he thought that the first scene of the interlude had lasted long enough, he suddenly said to his prim visitors, 'By the by, do you know my wife?' They said they did not. The Czar presented them to the Empress. She charmed them with her kindly grace. They came away sorrowing to think that their wrong-headed countrymen in England should be seeking a quarrel with so good and well-meaning a man as friend Nicholas Romanoff; but perhaps what more than all else laid hold of their hearts, was the thought that the Czar called his Empress so naturally by her dear homely title of wife.

* The scene of violence here prospectively alluded to will be mentioned in a later volume: it occurred in the autumn.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHAP. XXIV.

Temper of the English an obstacle to the maintenance of peace.

WELCOME or unwelcome, the truth must be told. A huge obstacle to the maintenance of peace in Europe was raised up by the temper of the English people. In public, men still used forms of expression implying that they would be content for England to lead a quiet life among the nations, and they still classed expectations of peace amongst their hopes, and declared in joyous tones that the prospects of war were gloomy and painful; but these phrases were the time-honoured canticles of a doctrine already discarded, and they who used them did not mean to deceive their neighbours, and did not deceive themselves.

Their desire for war.

The English desired war; and perhaps it ought to be acknowledged that there were many to whom war, for the sake of war, was no longer a hateful thought. Either the people had changed, or else there was hollowness in some of the professions which orators had made in their name.

Causes of the apparent change in their feeling.

When, by lapse of years, the glory of the great war against France had begun to fade from the daily thoughts of the people, they inclined to look more narrowly than before into the origin of taxes, and

were not unwilling to hear that their burthens were the result of wars which might have been easily avoided. Moreover, it chanced that from after Marlborough's time downwards, or, at all events, from after the period of Chatham's ascendancy, the wars in which England found herself engaged had been originated and conducted for the most part under the auspices of the Tory party; and it followed naturally that the Whig or Liberal party, being in antagonism to the party which had long kept the country under arms, should charge itself with the duty of expressing a just hatred of all wars which are needless or unjust. If speakers, in the performance of this duty, often used extravagant or fanatical language, they did not perhaps mean to inculcate much doctrine, but rather to display the vehemence of their hostility to the opposite faction. The applause which greeted these denunciations had the same meaning. On the other hand, the Tories declared that they did not yield to their adversaries in hatred of all needless wars; and thus, for near forty years, there was a chorus and an anti-chorus engaged in a continual chant, and denouncing wars in the abstract at times when no war seemed impending. To men skimming the surface of English politics it was made to appear that the people had a rooted love of peace.

These signs of a peaceful determination had increased in abundance after the great constitutional change which obliged the ruling classes to share their power with the people at large; and thence it

CHAP. XXIV.

was inferred that the desire of England to remain at peace was not the mere whim of any Administration or of any political party, but was based upon the solemn determination of the whole people; and it has been seen that the Emperor Nicholas had deliberately founded his policy upon this belief. A deeper knowledge might have taught him that a fiery, generous people is more quick to plunge into war, than a cold, worldly, politic oligarchy; and that, even if the policy of England were as much under the control of the masses of the people as he believed it to be, there would be all the more likelihood of her being prone to take up arms; because in States which are much under the governance of the democratic principle, a proposal to make war against the foreigner is often resorted to by one of the contending factions as a stratagem for baffling the others. But these truths lay below; and what appeared upon the surface of English politics was a sincere devotion to the cause of peace. Over and over again it was laid down, with the seeming concurrence of unanimous thousands, that war, if it were not for mere defence, was not only foolish, but was also in a high degree wicked.

But the English can hardly ever be governed by a dogma; for although they are by nature wise in action, yet, being vehement and careless in their way of applauding loud words, they encourage their orators, and those also who address them in writing, to be strenuous rather than wise; and the result is, that these teachers, trying always to be

more and more forcible, grow blind to logical dangers, and leap with headlong joy into the pit which reasoners call the Absurdum. Then, and not without joyous laughter, reaction begins.

All England had been brought to the opinion that it was a wickedness to incur war without necessity or justice; but when the leading spirits of the Peace Party had the happiness of beholding this wholesome result, they were far from stopping short. They went on to make light of the very principles by which peace is best maintained, and although they were conscientious men, meaning to say and do what was right, yet, being unacquainted with the causes which bring about the fall of empires, they deliberately inculcated that habit of setting comfort against honour which historians call 'corruption.' They made it plain, as they imagined, that no war which was not engaged in for the actual defence of the country could ever be right; but even there they took no rest, for they went on and on, and still on, until their foremost thinker reached the conclusion that, in the event of an attack upon our shores, the invaders ought to be received with such an effusion of hospitality and brotherly love as could not fail to disarm them of their enmity, and convert the once dangerous Zouave into the valued friend of the family.* Then, with great merriment, the whole

* I have no copy of this curious pamphlet before me, but it has been quoted (I believe by Lord Palmerston) in the House of Commons, and therefore the passage alluded to in the text might no doubt be found in Hansard. The writer, I remember, went further than is above stated. He argued that the French people would be so shamed by the

CHAP. XXIV.

English people turned round, and although they might still be willing to go to the brink of other precipices, they refused to go further towards that one. The doctrine had struck no root. It was ill suited to the race to whom it was addressed. The male cheered it, and forgot it until there came a time for testing it, and then discarded it; and the woman, from the very first, with her true and simple instinct, was quick to understand its value. She would subscribe, if her husband required it, to have the doctrine taught to charity children, but she would not suffer it to be taught to her own boy. So it proved barren. In truth, the English knew that they were a great and a free people, because their fathers, and their fathers' fathers, and all the great ancestry of whom they come, had been men of warlike quality; and deeming it time to gainsay the teaching of the Peace Party, but not being skilled in dialectics and the use of words, they unconsciously came to think that it would be well to express a practical opinion of the doctrine by taking the first honest and fair opportunity of engaging in war. Still, the conscience of the nation was sound, and men were as well convinced as ever of the wickedness of a war wrongly or wantonly incurred. They were in this mind: they would not go to war without believing that they had a good and a just cause, but it was certain that tidings importing the necessity of going

State of feeling in the spring of 1853.

kindness shown to their troops that they would never rest until they had paid us a large pecuniary indemnity for any losses or inconvenience which the invasion may have caused.

to war for duty's sake would be received with a welcome in England.

Effect of the Czar's aggression upon the public mind.

Therefore, when the people gradually came to hear of the fierce oppression attempted by Prince Mentschikoff, and the wise, firm, moderate resistance of the Turks, they believed that there might be coming in sight once more that very thing for which they longed in their hearts—namely, a just cause of war. And when at length the seemingly unequal conflict began, the bravery of the Turks on the Danube, and the skill of their General, quickly roused that sympathy which England hardly ever refuses to a valiant combatant who is weaker than his foe; but when they came to know of the catastrophe of Sinope, and to hear of it as a slaughter treacherously and stealthily committed upon their old ally by an enemy who had engaged to observe neutrality in the Euxine,* they were inflamed with a desire to execute justice, and nothing was now wanting to fill the measure of their righteous anger except a disclosure of the Czar's cold scheme for the spoliation of the 'sick 'man's' house.

Still in foreign affairs the nation looks for guidance to public men.

But after all, and especially in questions of foreign policy, the bulk of a nation must lean for guidance upon public men; and unless it appear that there were Statesmen deserving the ear of the country who faithfully tried to make a stand against error and failed for want of public support, it is unfair to charge the fault upon the people.

* The erroneousness of this impression has been already shown. See *ante*.

CHAP. XXIV.

There were two statesmen high in office, and high in the confidence of the nation, who, more than most other men, were known to be attached to the cause of peace. To them every man looked who desired that his country should not be drawn into war without stringent need.

The impression produced upon the Court of St Petersburg by the heedless language of our Prime Minister has been already described; but the effect which he wrought upon the public mind of England by remaining at the head of the Government is still to be shown. Lord Aberdeen's hatred of war was so honestly and piously entertained, and was, at the same time, so excessive and self-defeating, that in one point of view it had the character of a virtue, and in another it was more like disease. His feelings, no less than his opinions, turned him against all war: but against a war with Russia he was biassed by the impressions of his early life; by the relation of mutual esteem which had long existed between the Emperor Nicholas and himself; and perhaps by a dim foresight of the perils which might be brought upon Europe by a forcible breaking-up of the ties established by the Congress of Vienna and riveted by the Peace of Paris. In an early stage of the dispute, he resolved that he would not remain at the head of the Government unless he could maintain peace; and he anxiously sought to choose a moment for making his stand against the further progress towards war. Far from wishing to prolong his hold of power, he was always labouring

Lord Aberdeen.

to make out when, and on what ground, he could lay down the burthen which oppressed him. Every day he passed his sure hour and a half in the Foreign Office, and came away more and more anxious perhaps, but without growing more clear-sighted. If he could ever have found the point where the road to peace diverged from the road to war, he would instantly have declared for peace; and, failing to carry the Government with him, would have joyfully resigned office, and for his deliverance would have offered up thanksgiving to Heaven. But his intellect, though not without high quality in it, was deficient in clearness and force. In troubled times it did not yield him light enough to walk by, and it had not the propelling power which was needed for pushing him into opportune action. In politics, though not in matters of faith, he wanted the sacred impulse which his Kirk is accustomed to call 'the 'word of quickening.' Lord Clarendon's polished despatches so forced his approval that he could never lay his hand upon one of them and make it the subject of a ministerial crisis. Yet day by day, without knowing it, the Prime Minister was assenting to a course of policy destined to end in a rupture. Lord Clarendon's pithy phrase was less applicable to the country at large than to the Prime Minister. It was strictly true that Lord Aberdeen drifted. He steadfastly faced towards peace, and was always being carried towards war. He remained at the head of the Government; and, the papers being withheld from Parliament, the

CHAP. XXIV.

country was led to imagine that all which it was possible to do or suffer for the sake of peace would be done and suffered by a Cabinet of which Lord Aberdeen was the chief.

Mr Gladstone.

But there was another member of the Cabinet who was supposed to hold war in deep abhorrence. Mr Gladstone was Chancellor of the Exchequer; and since he was by virtue of his office the appointed guardian of the public purse, those pure and lofty principles which made him cling to peace were reinforced by an official sense of the harm which war inflicts by its costliness. Now it happened that, if he was famous for the splendour of his eloquence, for his unaffected piety, and for his blameless life, he was celebrated far and wide for a more than common liveliness of conscience. He had once imagined it to be his duty to quit a Government, and to burst through strong ties of friendship and gratitude, by reason of a thin shade of difference on the subject of white or brown sugar. It was believed that, if he were to commit even a little sin, or to imagine an evil thought, he would instantly arraign himself before the dread tribunal which awaited him in his own bosom; and that, his intellect being subtle and microscopic, and delighting in casuistry and exaggeration, he would be likely to give his soul a very harsh trial, and treat himself as a great criminal for faults too minute to be visible to the naked eyes of laymen. His friends lived in dread of his virtues as tending to make him whimsical and unstable; and the practical politicians, conceiving that he was not

to be depended upon for party purposes, and was bent upon none but lofty objects, used to look upon him as dangerous—used to call him behind his back a good man—a good man in the worst sense of the term. In 1853 it seemed only too probable that he might quit office upon an infinitely slight suspicion of the warlike tendency of the Government: but what appeared certain was, that if, upon the vital question of peace or war, the Government should depart by even a hair's-breadth from the right path, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would instantly refuse to be a partaker of their fault. He, and he before all other men, stood charged to give the alarm of danger; and there seemed to be no particle of ground for fearing that, like the Prime Minister, he would drift. The known watchfulness and alacrity of his conscience, and his power of detecting small germs of evil, led the world to think it impossible that he could be moving for months together in a wrong course without knowing it.

Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone remained in office.

Now, from the beginning of the negotiations until the final rupture, Lord Aberdeen continued to be the Prime Minister, and Mr Gladstone the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The result was that, during the session of 1853, and the autumn which followed it, the presence of these two Ministers in the Cabinet was regarded as a guarantee of the peaceful tendency of the Government; and when, after the catastrophe of Sinope, it became hardly possible to doubt that war was at hand, the continuing responsibility of these good men seemed to dispense the most anxious

Effect of this in paralysing the efforts of those who wished to prevent a war.

CHAP. XXIV.

lovers of peace from the duty of further questioning; for if Lord Aberdeen continued to head the Ministry which was leading the country into war, people thought he must have attained a bitter certainty that war was needed: and, on the other hand, it was clear that Mr Gladstone, remaining in office, and taking it upon his conscience to prepare funds for the bloody strife, was giving to the public a sure guarantee that the enterprise in which he helped to engage the country was blameless at the very least, and even perhaps pure and holy. It was thus that the conscience of the people got quieted. It was a hard task to have to argue that peace could be honestly and wisely maintained when Lord Aberdeen was levying war. None but a bold man could say that the war was needless or wicked, whilst Mr Gladstone was feeding it with his own hand.

It was thus that, by the course which Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone had been taking, the efforts of those who loved peace were paralysed. No doubt a cold retrospect, carried on with the light of the past, may enable a political critic to fix upon more than one occasion when, holding the opinions which they did, these two Ministers might have resolved to make a stand for peace; and it is believed that, long before his death, Lord Aberdeen saw this and grieved: but if any man will honestly recall the state of his own feelings and opinions in the year 1853, he will find perhaps that he himself at the time was carried down by the flood of events; and when he has submitted to this self-discipline, he

will be the better able to understand that others, though honest and able, might easily lose their footing. At all events, the errors of Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone, if errors they were, were only errors of judgment. The scrupulous purity of their motives has never been brought into question.

The ruin of their cause was not for want of ample grounds to stand upon.

But if these were the causes which inclined the bulk of the English people to desire or to assent to the war, they hardly yield reasons sufficing to show why the lesser number of men, who honestly thought that peace ought to be maintained, should suffer themselves to be overpowered without making stand enough to prove that they clung to their old faith, and that England, however warlike, was, at all events, not of one mind. The hottest defenders of the war-policy could hardly refuse to acknowledge that there was much semblance of reason on the side of their adversaries. No one could say that the interest which England had in the perfect independence of the Ottoman Empire was so obvious and so deep as to exclude all questioning; and even if a man were driven from that first ground, still, without being guilty of paradox, he might fairly dispute, and say that the independence of the Sultan was not really brought into peril by a form of words which, during some weeks, had received the approval of every one of the five great Powers.

But if these views were only plausible, there was another which was sound. It could be fairly maintained that the intrusion of Russia into two provinces lying far away on the south-eastern frontiers

CHAP. XXIV.

of Austria was no cause why England alone, nor why England and France together, should undertake to stand forward and perform, at their own charge and cost, a duty which attached upon Austria in the first place, and next upon Europe at large.

Nor for want of oratorical power.

Of course, the actual and immediate success of any such struggle for the maintenance of peace was grievously embarrassed, in the way already shown, by the course which had been taken by Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone; but it is not the custom of the English to be utterly disheartened by political losses; and it happened that outside the Government Offices the cause of peace was headed by two men who had been powerful in their time, and who retained the qualities of mind and body by which, in former years, they had gained a great sway.

Mr Cobden and Mr Bright.

Mr Cobden and Mr Bright were members of the House of Commons. Both had the gift of a manly strenuous eloquence; and their diction, being founded upon English lore rather than upon shreds of weak Latin, went straight to the mind of their hearers. Of these men the one could persuade, the other could attack; and, indeed, Mr Bright's oratory was singularly well qualified for preventing an erroneous acquiescence in the policy of the day; for, besides that he was honest and fearless—besides that, with a ringing voice, he had all the clearness and force which resulted from his great natural gifts, as well as from his one-sided method of thinking—he had the advantage of being generally able to speak in a state of sincere anger. In former years, whilst

their minds were disciplined by the almost mathematic exactness of the reasonings on which they relied, and when they were acting in concert with the shrewd traders of the north who had a very plain object in view, these two orators had shown with what a strength, with what a masterly skill, with what patience, with what a high courage, they could carry a great scientific truth through the storms of politics. They had shown that they could arouse and govern the assenting thousands who listened to them with delight—that they could bend the House of Commons—that they could press their creed upon a Prime Minister, and put upon his mind so hard a stress that, after a while, he felt it to be a torture and a violence to his reason to have to make stand against them. Nay, more: each of these two gifted men had proved that he could go bravely into the midst of angry opponents—could show them their fallacies one by one—destroy their favourite theories before their very faces, and triumphantly argue them down. Now these two men were honestly devoted to the cause of peace. They honestly believed that the impending war with Russia was a needless war. There was no stain upon their names. How came it that they sank, and were able to make no good stand for the cause they loved so well?

The answer is simple.

Reasons why they were able to make no stand.

Upon the question of peace or war (the very question upon which more than any other a man might well desire to make his counsels tell) these two

CHAP. XXIV.

gifted men had forfeited their hold upon the ear of the country. They had forfeited it by their former want of moderation. It was not by any intemperate words upon the question of this war with Russia that they had shut themselves out from the counsels of the nation; but in former years they had adopted and put forward, in their strenuous way, some of the more extravagant doctrines of the Peace Party. In times when no war was in question, they had run down the practice of war in terms so broad and indiscriminate that they were understood to commit themselves to a disapproval of all wars not strictly defensive, and to decline to treat as defensive those wars which, although not waged against an actual invader of the Queen's dominions, might still be undertaken by England in the performance of an European duty, or for the purpose of checking the undue ascendancy of another Power. Of course the knowledge that they held doctrines of this wide sort disqualified them from arguing with any effect against the war then impending. A man cannot have weight as an opponent of any particular war if he is one who is known to be against almost all war. It is vain for him to offer to be moderate for the nonce, and to propose to argue the question in a way which his hearers will recognise. In vain he declares that for the sake of argument he will lay aside his own broad principles and mimic the reasoning of his hearers. Practical men know that his mind is under the sway of an antecedent determination which dispenses him from the more narrow but more important inquiry

in which they are engaged. They will not give ear to one who is striving to lay down the conclusions which ought, as he says, to follow from other men's principles. He who altogether abjures the juice of the grape cannot usefully criticise the vintage of any particular year; and a man who is the steady adversary of wars in general, upon broad and paramount grounds, will never be regarded as a sound judge of the question whether any particular war is wicked or righteous, nor whether it is foolish or wise.

It must be added that there was another cause which tended to disqualify Mr Bright from taking an effective part in the maintenance of peace. For one who would undertake a task of that kind at a time when warlike ardour is prevailing in the country, it is above all things necessary that he should be a statesman so truly attached to what men mean when they talk of their country, and so jealous of its honour, that no man could ascribe his efforts in the cause of peace to motives which a warlike and high-spirited people would repudiate. Mr Bright sincerely desired the welfare of the traders and workmen in the United Kingdom; and if he desired the welfare of the other classes of the people with less intensity, it may fairly be believed that to all he wished to see justice done: so, if this worthy disposition of mind were equivalent to what a man calls his 'love of his country,' no one could fairly say that Mr Bright was without the passion. But, in another, and certainly the old and the usual sense, a man's love 'of his country' is understood to represent some-

CHAP. XXIV.

thing more than common benevolence towards the persons living within it. For if he be the citizen of an ancient State blessed with freedom, renowned in arms, and holding wide sway in the world, his love of his country means something of attachment to the institutions which have made her what she is—means something of pride in the long suffering, and the battle, and the strife which have shed glory upon his countrymen in his own time, and upon their fathers in the time before him. It means that he feels his country's honour to be a main term and element of his own content. It means that he is bent upon the upholding of her dominion, and is so tempered as to become the sudden enemy of any man who, even though he be not an invader, still attempts to hack at her power. Now in this the heathen, but accustomed sense of the phrase, Mr Bright would be the last to say that he was a lover of his country. He would rather, perhaps, acknowledge that, taking 'his country' in that sense, he hated it. Yet at a time when the spirit of the nation was up, no man could usefully strive to moderate or guide it unless his patriotism were believed to be exactly of that heathen sort which Mr Bright disapproved. Thus, by the nature of his patriotism no less than by the immoderate width of his views on the lawfulness of wars, this powerful orator was so disabled as to be hindered from applying his strength towards the maintenance of peace.

The country was impassioned, but it was not so mad as to be deaf to precious counsels; and a states-

man who had shown by his past life that he loved his country in the ancient way, and that he knew how to contemplate the eventuality of war with a calm and equal mind, might have won attention for views which questioned the necessity of the war then threatened; and if, in good time, he had brought to bear upon his opinions a sufficing power and knowledge, he might have altered the policy of his country.* But outside the Cabinet the real tenor of the negotiations of 1853 was still unknown; and Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone consenting to remain members of a war-going Government, and Mr Cobden and Mr Bright being disqualified for useful debate by the nature of their opinions, no stand could be made.

By these steps, then, the English people passed from a seeming approval of the doctrines of the Peace Party to a state of warlike ardour; and it was plain that, if the Queen should send down to the Houses of Parliament a message importing war, the Royal appeal would be joyfully answered by an almost unanimous people.

* This was in print before that curious and interesting confirmation of my statement—my statement of the relations between the Peace Party and their country—which Mr Cobden has since given to the world. Mr Cobden has said that at the time of the war neither he nor Mr Bright could win any attention to their views; and he added that he (Mr Cobden) will never again try to withstand a warlike ardour once kindled, because, when a people are inflamed in that way, they are no better than 'mad dogs.'—*Speech in the autumn of* 1862. He sees no defect in the principles of a Peace Party which is to suspend its operations in times of warlike excitement.

CHAPTER XXV.

CHAP. XXV.

Meeting of Parliament.

WHEN the English Parliament assembled on the 31st of January, there was still going on in Europe a semblance of negotiation; but amongst men accustomed to the aspect of public affairs, there was hardly more than one who failed to see that France and England had gone too far to be able to recede, and that, by the very weight of their power and its inherent duties, they were now at last drawn into war. This condition of things was fairly enough disclosed by the Queen's Speech, and Parliament was asked to provide for an increase of the military and naval forces, with a view to give weight to the negotiations still pending. But the English Government was not suffered to forget its bond with the French Emperor; and the Prime Minister, whilst still indulging a hope of peace, consented to record and continue the error which had brought him to the verge of war. It seems that for good reasons it was of some moment to the French Emperor to be signally named in the Queen's Speech; and Lord Aberdeen again submitted to a form of words which carefully distinguished the posture of France and England

The Queen's Speech.

from that of the four Powers. The Queen was advised to say: 'I have continued to act in cordial 'co-operation with the Emperor of the French; and 'my endeavours in conjunction with my Allies to 'preserve and to restore peace between the con- 'tending parties, although hitherto unsuccessful, have 'been unremitting.'

The policy which it indicated.

Like the similar paragraph which had marked the Royal Speech at the close of the preceding session, this phrase, strange as it was, gave a true though somewhat dim glimpse of the policy which was leading England astray. In principle she was marching along with all the rest of the four Powers, and yet all the while she was engaged with the French Emperor in a separate course of action. If the aims of Austria and Prussia had been seriously at variance with those of the Western Powers, this difference might have been a good reason for separate action on the part of France and England. But the contrary was true. So deep was the interest of Austria in the cause, and so closely were her views approved by Prussia, that although for several months France and England had been pressing forward in a way which seemed to endanger the coherence of the quadruple union, still even this dangerous course had hitherto failed to destroy the unanimity of the four Powers. If the French Emperor sought to use his alliance with England as a means of strengthening his hold over France, and if England was beginning to love the thought of war for war's sake, Austria, from motives of a higher and more cogent

The separate understanding with France not justified by any difference of opinion between England and the German Powers.

Unswerving resolve of Austria (and Prussia supports her) to rid the Principalities of Russian troops.

CHAP. XXV.

sort (for she saw her interests vitally touched, and her safety threatened), was eager and determined to take such steps as might be needed for delivering the Principalities. Prussia agreed with her. It was nothing but the impatience and forwardness of France and England which relieved Austria from the necessity of taking the lead; for the wrong which had to be redressed was one from which she of all the great Powers was the most a sufferer; and she had the concurrence of Prussia not only in regard to the existing state of things, but even as to the ulterior objects of the war which her resolve might bring upon Germany.

Proofs of this drawn from transactions anterior to the Queen's Speech.

The proofs of all this abound. By the repeated words of responsible statesmen, by despatches, by collective notes, by protocols, by solemn treaty of offensive and defensive alliance against Russia, by peremptory summons addressed to the Czar, and, finally (so far as concerns Austria), by the application of force, the German Powers disclosed and executed their policy; and the policy which they so disclosed and executed was the same policy as had been avowed by the Western Powers. It has been seen that in that early period of the troubles, when the Czar was but beginning to cross the Pruth, Austria took upon herself to endeavour to form a league for forcing the Czar to relinquish the Principalities; and from that hour down to the time when Nicholas gave way and re-entered his own dominions, her efforts to bring about this end were unceasing and restless.

Of the spirit in which Austria was acting through all the early stages of the negotiations, many a proof has been already given. With time her impatience of the Czar's intrusion upon her southern frontier increased and increased. It is true that she did not desire war: she anxiously wished to avoid it. She wished, if it were possible, to achieve the end without war, but to achieve it she was resolved; and if a vestige of the mediating character which had belonged to her in the summer of 1853, or her legitimate anxiety to spare the Czar's personal feelings, was a motive which tended to soften her language, it did not deflect her policy. Count Buol declared that although, in treating with Russia, 'more 'management of terms'* was required from Austria than from the Western Powers, the objects sought by all the four Powers were the same, and that they ought to be compassed by 'a general concordance in 'the way of putting them forward.'† But even the notion of using a gentler form of expression than the one employed by the Western Powers was quickly abandoned, and Austria fouud no difficulty in adopting the exact words of the collective Note framed by Lord Clarendon in concert with the French Government. So anxious was Austria to remain on the same ground with the rest of the four Powers, that she came into every term of the firm and wise scheme of action laid down by Lord Clarendon on the 16th of November,‡ and bitterly offended the

* 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 231. † Ibid. p. 278.
‡ Ibid. pp. 238, 258.

CHAP. XXV.

Czar by agreeing, at Lord Clarendon's instance, that the Porte should not be even asked to accept any condition which it had already rejected, and by affirming the determination of the four Powers to intervene in any settlement of the dispute between Russia and Turkey.

Prussia also gave her unreserved adhesion to the plan of action laid down by Lord Clarendon and to the measures resulting from it.* By the Protocol of the 5th of December 1853 † both Austria and Prussia joined with the Western Powers in declaring that the existence of Turkey in the limits assigned to it by existing treaties was one of the necessary conditions of the European equilibrium.

By the Protocol of the 13th of January the four Powers recorded their approval of the terms agreed to by the Turkish Government, and resolved to submit them to the Court of St Petersburg. At the very time when the English Government were framing the Speech from the Throne which ostentatiously separated France and England from the rest of the four Powers, the two great Courts of Germany were sending back Count Orloff and Baron Budberg to St Petersburg, not only with a refusal on their part to give any engagement to stand neutral, but with a plain avowal that they intended to remain faithful to the principles which the four Powers had adopted in concert. Prussia told Baron Budberg that she should have to devise means without Russia for maintaining the equilibrium of Europe.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ii. p. 263. † Ibid. p. 296.

In significant words the Emperor Francis Joseph told Count Orloff that he should have to be guided by the interests and the dignity of his Empire.

It is said that, by the tidings which forced him to know that he was alienated from the Austrian Emperor, the Czar was wounded deep. He had conceived a strong affection for Francis Joseph, and wherever he went he carried with him a small statuette which recalled to his mind the features of the youthful Kaiser. It would seem that his affection was of the kind which a loving and yet stern father bears his son, for it was joined with a sense of right to exact a great deference to his will. Nicholas had been strangely slow to believe that Francis Joseph could harbour the thought of opposing him in arms; and when at last the truth was forced upon him, he desired that the marble should be taken from his sight. But he did not, they say, speak in anger. When he had spoken he covered his face with his hands and was wrung with grief.

What we are showing just now is the complete union of opinion which was existing between England and the two great Courts of Germany on the 31st of January 1854, and in order to this we have already referred to a variety of diplomatic transactions coming down to the time in question; but the policy of the Courts of Vienna and Berlin at the close of the month of January is to be inferred, of course, from the transactions which followed this date, as well as from those which preceded it; and therefore it will

CHAP. XXV.

be convenient to go forward a little in advance of the general progress of the narrative, in order to bring under one view the grounds which support our proposition.

Proofs drawn from transactions subsequent to the Queen's Speech.

Day by day the joint pressure of the four Powers became more cogent. By the Protocol of the 2d of February the four Powers unanimously rejected the counter-propositions made by Russia. On the 14th of March both Austria and Prussia addressed circulars to the Courts of the German Confederation, in which they pointed out that the interests in question were essentially German interests, and that the active co-operation of Germany might be needed. On the 18th of March the King of Prussia asked his Chamber for an extraordinary credit of thirty million of thalers; and he at the same time declared that he would not swerve from the principles established by the Vienna Conference, and would faithfully protect every member of the Confederation who, at an earlier moment than Prussia, might be called on to draw the sword for the defence of German interests.

Nor were these bare words. Austria, it has been already said, was so placed that, whatever dangers she might draw upon her other frontiers, she could act with irresistible pressure upon the invader of the Principalities. On the 6th and 22d of February she reinforced her army on the frontier of Wallachia by 50,000 men, and thus placed the Russian army of occupation completely at her mercy. On the day when she sent that last reinforcement into the Banat, she had grown so impatient of the further

continuance of the Russians in the Principalities that she actually pressed France and England to summon Russia to quit the Principalities under pain of a declaration of war, and undertook to support their summons.* Prussia was approving; and on the 25th Baron Manteuffel wrote to Count Arnim at Vienna 'on the subject of the more decided policy 'which it was supposed the Austrian Government 'was about to adopt in the affairs of the East, and 'expressed the satisfaction of the Prussian Govern-'ment at the interests of Germany on the Danube 'being likely to be so warmly espoused.' † On the 2d of March the French Emperor had so little doubt of the concurrence of Austria and Germany, that he announced it in his Speech from the Throne. 'Ger-'many,' said he, 'has recovered her independence, 'and has looked freely to see whither her true inter-'ests led her. Austria especially, who cannot see 'with indifference the events going on, will join our 'alliance, and will thus come to confirm the morality 'and justice of the war which we undertake. We go 'to Constantinople with Germany.'

On the 20th of March the four Powers were so well agreed that, when Greece sought to make a diversion in favour of Russia, the representatives of Austria, Prussia, France, and England, all joined in a collective Note, which called upon the Greek Government, in terms approaching menace, to give way to the demands of the Porte. On the very day which followed the English declaration of war, the Emperor

* 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 53. † Ibid. p. 64.

CHAP. XXV.

of Austria appointed the Archduke Albert to the command of the forces on the frontier of Wallachia, and at the same time the 'Third Army' was put upon the war footing. A little later* the Emperor of Austria ordered a new levy of 95,000 men for the defence of his frontiers. Later still, but within one day† of the time when France and England were making their alliance, Austria and Prussia joined with France and England in a Protocol, which not only recorded the fact that the hostile step then just taken by France and England was 'supported by 'Austria and Prussia as being founded in right,' but went on to declare that 'at that solemn moment the 'Governments of the four Powers remained united 'in their object of maintaining the integrity of the 'Ottoman Empire, of which the fact of the evacua- 'tion of the Danubian Principalities is and will 'remain one of the essential conditions;' and that 'the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire 'is and remains the *sine quâ non* condition of every 'transaction having for its object the re-establish- 'ment of peace between the belligerent Powers.' Finally, the Protocol stipulated that none of the 'four Powers should enter into any definitive 'arrangement with the Imperial Court of Russia 'which should be at variance with the principles 'declared by the Protocol without first deliberating 'thereon in common.'‡

On the 20th of April Austria and Prussia con-

* May 15. † April 9, 1854.

‡ 'Eastern Papers,' part viii. p. 2.

tracted with each other an offensive and defensive alliance, by which they guaranteed to each other all their respective possessions, so that an attack upon the territory of one should be regarded by the other as an act of hostility against his own territory, and engaged to hold a part of their forces in perfect readiness for war. By the Second Article they declared that they stood 'engaged to defend the 'rights and interests of Germany against all and 'every injury, and to consider themselves bound ac- 'cordingly for the mutual repulse of every attack on 'any part whatsoever of their territories; likewise, 'also, in the case where one of the two may find him- 'self, in understanding with the others, obliged to ad- 'vance actively for the defence of German interests.'*

By the Additional Article they declared 'that the 'indefinite continuance of the occupation of the ter- 'ritories on the Lower Danube, under the sovereignty 'of the Ottoman Porte, by imperial Russian troops, 'would endanger the political, moral, and material 'interests of the whole German Confederation as 'also of their own States, and the more so as Russia 'extends her warlike operations on Turkish terri- 'tory;' and then went on to stipulate 'that the 'Austrian Government should address a commu- 'nication to the Russian Court, with the object 'of obtaining from the Emperor of Russia the 'necessary orders for putting an immediate stop 'to the further advance of his armies upon the 'Turkish territory, as also to request of His Imperial

* 'Eastern Papers,' part ix. p. 3.

CHAP. XXV.

'Majesty sufficient guarantees for the prompt evacuation of the Danubian Principalities, and that 'the Prussian Government should again, in the most 'energetic manner, support these communications.' Finally, the high contracting parties agreed that, 'if, 'contrary to expectation, the answer of the Russian 'Court should not be of a nature to give them entire 'satisfaction, the measures to be taken by one of the 'contracting parties, according to the terms of Article II. signed on that day, would be on the understanding that every hostile attack on the territory 'of one of the contracting parties should be repelled 'with all the military forces at the disposal of the 'other.' *

Of the intent and the meaning of this treaty, and the use which Austria and Prussia were about to make of it, no doubt could exist. Failing the peremptory summons which was to be addressed to Russia, the forces of Austria alone were to execute the easy task of expelling the troops of the Czar from the Principalities; and in order to withstand the vengeance which this step might provoke, Austria and Prussia together stood leagued.

By the Protocol of the 23d of May, the four Powers declared that both the Anglo-French treaty and the Austro-Prussian treaty bound the parties, in the relative situations to which they applied, to secure the same common object—namely, the evacuation of the Principalities and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.†

* 'Eastern Papers,' part x.

† Ibid. part ix. p. 1.

Now the mind and the solemn determination of Austria and Prussia being such as are shown by the Protocol of the 9th and the treaty of the 20th April, where was there such a difference of opinion —where was there even such a shadow of a difference —as to justify the Western States in pushing forward and separating themselves from the rest of the four Powers? The avowed principles and objects of the four Powers were exactly the same. If they had acted together, the very weight of their power would have given them an almost judicial authority, and would have enabled them to enforce the cause of right without wounding the pride of the disturber, and without inflicting war upon Europe.

Was Austria backward? Was she so little prone to action that it was necessary for the Western Powers to move to the front and fight her battles for her? The reverse is the truth. The Western Powers, indeed, were more impatient than Germany was to go through the forms which were necessary for bringing themselves legally into a state of war, but for action of a serious kind they were not yet ready. Whilst they were only preparing, Austria was applying force. On the 3d of June, with the full support of Prussia, she summoned the Emperor Nicholas to evacuate the Principalities. Her summons was the summons of a Power having an army on the edge of the province into which the Russian forces had been rashly extended. Such a summons was a mandate. The Czar could not disobey it. He could not stand in Wallachia when he was called

CHAP. XXV.

upon to quit the province by a Power which had assembled its forces upon his flank and rear. He sought, indeed, to make terms, but the German Powers were peremptory. On the 14th Austria entered into a convention with the Porte, which not only legalised her determination to drive the Russian forces from the Principalities, and to occupy them with her own troops, but which formally joined Austria in an alliance with the Porte against Russia; for, by the 1st Article of the convention, the Emperor of Austria 'engages to exhaust all the 'means of negotiation, and all other means, to 'obtain the evacuation of the Danubian Princi-'palities by the foreign army which occupies them, 'and even to employ, in case they are required, the 'number of troops necessary to attain this end.'* And since Russia could not invade European Turkey by land without marching through the Principalities, this undertaking by Austria involved an engagement to free the Sultan's land frontiers in Europe from Russian invasion. Exactly at the same time† Austria and Prussia addressed notes to the Powers represented at the Conference of Bamberg, in which the liberation of the commerce and navigation of the Danube was held out to Germany as the object to be obtained.

The time when the interests of Austria and Prussia began to

Austria was upon the brink of war with Russia, was preparing to take forcible possession of the Principalities, and had despatched an officer to the English headquarters with a view to concert a

* 'Eastern Papers,' part xii. † 14th and 16th of June.

CHAP. XXV.

joint scheme of military operations, when the Czar at length gave way, and abandoned the whole of the territory which, under the nauseous description of a 'material guarantee,' had become the subject of war. Other causes, as will be seen, were conducing to this result; but none were so cogent as the forcible pressure which Austria had exerted, by first assembling forces in the Banat and then summoning the Czar to withdraw from the invaded provinces.

divide them from the Western Powers.

Of course, when the object which called forth the German Powers was attained, and when it transpired (as it did at the same time) that the Western Powers were resolved to abandon the common field of action, and to undertake the invasion by sea of a distant Russian province inaccessible to Austria and Prussia, then at last, and then for the first time, the German Powers found that their interests were parting them from the great maritime States of the West; for in one and the same week they were relieved from the grievance which was their motive for action, and deprived of all hope of support from the Western Powers; but it is certain that from the moment when the Czar first seized the Principalities to that in which he recrossed the Pruth, the determination of Austria to put an end to the intrusion was never languid, and was always increasing in force. It is certain, also, that up to the time when the relinquishment of the Principalities began, there was no defection on the part of Prussia;* and that the minor States of Ger-

From first to last Austria and Prussia never swerved from their resolve to secure the Czar's relinquishment of the Principalities.

* Prussia began to hang back, it seems, on about the 21st of July. 'Eastern Papers,' part xi. p. 1; and this was exactly the time when her

CHAP. XXV.

many, fully alive to the importance of a struggle which promised to free the great outlet of the Danube from Russian dominion, were resolved to support Austria and Prussia with the troops of the Confederation.* As soon as the Principalities were relinquished by the Czar they were occupied by Austrian troops, in pursuance of the convention with the Porte; and thus the outrage, which during twelve months had disturbed the tranquillity of Europe, was then at last finally repressed.

interests counselled her to do so; for by that day she knew that the deliverance of the Principalities was secured and in process of execution, and had also no doubt learned of the determination of the Western Powers to move their forces to the Crimea, thereby uncovering Germany. Austria, with similar motives for separation, was less inclined to part from the Western Powers. See her Note of the 8th August 1854, and the various diplomatic transactions in which she took part down to the close of the war.

* 20th July 1854. The relinquishment of the Principalities virtually began on the 26th of June—the day when the siege of Silistria was raised—and before the end of July the Russian forces had quitted the capital of Wallachia. On the 2d of August they repassed the Pruth.

CHAPTER XXVI.

For the sake of bringing under one view the course of action followed by the German Powers, down to the moment when their object was achieved by the deliverance of the Principalities, it has been necessary, as we have said, to go forward in advance of the period reached by the main thread of the narrative. The subject thus quitted for a moment and now resumed is the policy which was disclosed by the English Government upon the opening of Parliament.

Spirit of warlike adventure in England.

Distinct from the martial ardour already kindled in England, there had sprung up amongst the people an almost romantic craving for warlike adventure, and this feeling was not slow to reach the Cabinet. Now, without severance from the German Powers, there could plainly be little prospect of adventure; for, besides that the German monarchs desired to free the Principalities with as little resort to hostilities as might be compatible with the attainment of the end, it was almost certain that the policy of keeping up the perfect union and co-operation of the four Powers would prevent war by its over-

CHAP. XXVI.

whelming force. Like the power of the law, it would operate by coercion, and not by clangour of arms. This was a merit; but it was a merit fatal to its reception in England. The popularity of such a policy was nearly upon the same modest level as the popularity of virtue. All whose volitions were governed by the imagined rapture of freeing Poland, or destroying Cronstadt and lording it with our flag in the Baltic—or taking the command of the Euxine, and sinking the Russian fleet under the guns of Sebastopol; all who meant to raise Circassia, and cut off the Muscovite from the glowing South by holding the Dariel Pass, and those also who dwelt in fancy upon deeds to be done on the shores of the Caspian;—all these, and many more, saw plainly enough that separation from the German Powers and alliance with the new Bonaparte was the only road to adventure. Lord Aberdeen was not one of these, but it was his fate to act as though he were. He was not without a glimmering perception that the firmly maintained union of the four Powers meant peace:* but he saw the truth dimly; and there being a certain slowness in his high intellectual nature, he was not so touched by his belief as to be able to make it the guide of his action. He seems to have gone on imagining that, consistently with the maintenance of a perfect union of the four Powers, there might be a separate and still more perfect union between two of them, and that this kind of alliance within alliance was a

The bearing of this spirit upon the policy of the Government.

* 129 Hansard, p. 1650.

structure not fatal—nay, even perhaps conducive— to peace.

England was under engagements with the French Emperor.

And, after all, England was not free: she was bound to the French Emperor. No treaty of alliance had been signed, but the understanding disclosed in the summer of the year before was still riveted upon the members of the English Government. They had been drawn into a weighty engagement in 1853, and now they had to perform it. In the midst of perfect concord between her and her three allies, England had to stand forward with one of them in advance of the rest, and thus ruin that security for the maintenance of peace which depended upon the united action of the four great Powers. As the price of his consenting to join reluctant France in an alliance with Turkey, the French Emperor was justly entitled to insist on the other terms of the bond, and not only to be signally coupled with England in a course of action which was to separate her from the great German States, but to have it blazoned out to the world beforehand that, distinctly from the concord of the four Powers, the Queen of England and he were acting together. The Royal Speech of January 1854 was as clear in this as the Speech of the previous August. Both disclosed a separate understanding with the French Emperor. In both, as any one could see who was used to State writings, the mark was set upon England with the same branding-iron.

To a man looking back upon the past, it seems strange that a Cabinet of English statesmen could

CHAP. XXVI.

Into this policy the bulk of the Cabinet drifted.

have been led to adopt this singular policy. It would seem that, with many of the Cabinet, the tendency of the measures which they were sanctioning was concealed from them by the gentleness of the incline on which they moved; and if there were some of them who had a clearer view of their motives, it must be inferred that they acted upon grounds not yet disclosed to the world. Of course, what the welfare of the State required was a Ministry which shared and honoured the public feeling, without being so carried down by it as to lose the statesman's power of understanding and controlling events. But this was not given. Of the bulk of the Cabinet, and possibly of all of them except one, Lord Clarendon's pithy phrase was the true one,—they drifted. Wishing to control events, they were controlled by them. They aimed to go in one direction; but, lapsing under pressure of forces external and misunderstood, they always went in the other.

The Minister who went his own way.

The statesman who went his own way was one whose share in the governance of events was not much known. He was supposed to be under a kind of ostracism. He had not been banished from England, nor even from the Cabinet; but, holding office under a Prime Minister whose views upon foreign policy were much opposed to his own, and relegated to duties connected with the peaceful administration of justice, it seemed to the eye of the common observer that for the time he was annulled; and the humorous stories which floated about Whitehall

went to show that the deposed Lord of Foreign Affairs had consented to forget his former greatness and to accept his Home Office duties in a spirit of half-cynical, half-joyous disdain, but without the least discontent. And, in truth, he had no ground for ill-humour. In politics he was without vanity. What he cared for was power, and power he had. Indeed, circumstanced as he then was, he must have known that one of the main conditions of his strength was the general belief that he had none. The light of the past makes it easy to see that the expedient of trying to tether him down in the Home Office would alleviate his responsibility and increase his real power. To those who know anything of Lord Palmerston's intellectual power, of his boldness, his vast and concentrated energy, his instinct for understanding the collective mind of a body of men and of a whole nation, and, above all, his firm robust will; nay, even to those who only know of his daring achievements — achievements half peaceful, half warlike, half righteous, half violent in many lands, and on many a sea—the notion of causing him to be subordinated to Lord Aberdeen in Foreign Affairs seems hardly more sound than a scheme providing that the greater shall be contained in the less. Statesmen on the Continent would easily understand this, for they had lived much under the weight of his strenuous nature; but at that time he had not been much called upon to apply his energies to the domestic affairs of England. Besides, he had been more seen

CHAP. XXVI.

in his own country than abroad, and for that very reason he was less known, because there was much upon the mere outside which tended to mask his real nature. His partly Celtic blood, and perhaps too, in early life, his boyish consciousness of power, had given him a certain elation of manner and bearing which kept him for a long time out of the good graces of the more fastidious part of the English world. The defect was toned down by age, for it lay upon the surface only, and in his inner nature there was nothing vulgar nor unduly pretending. Still, the defect made people slow—made them take forty years — to recognise the full measure of his intellectual strength. Moreover, the English had so imperfect a knowledge of the stress which he had long been putting upon foreign Governments, that the mere outward signs which he gave to his countrymen at home—his frank speech, his offhand manner, his ready banter, his kind, joyous, beaming eyes—were enough to prevent them from accustoming themselves to look upon him as a man of stern purpose. Upon the whole, notwithstanding his European fame, it was easy for him at this time to escape grave attention in England.

He was not a man who would come to a subject with which he was dealing for the first time with any great store of preconceived opinions, but he wrote so strenuously — he always, they say, wrote standing —and was apt to be so much struck with the cogency of his own arguments, that by the mere process of framing despatches he wrought himself into strong

convictions, or rather perhaps into strong resolves; and he clung to these with such a lasting tenacity that, if he had been a solemn, austere personage, the world would have accused him of pedantry. Like most gifted men who evolve their thoughts with a pen, he was very clear, very accurate. Of every subject which he handled gravely, he had a tight, iron grasp. Without being inflexible, his will, it has been already said, was powerful, and it swung with a great momentum in one direction until, for some good and sound reason, it turned and swung in another. He pursued one object at a time without being distracted by other game. All that was fanciful, or for any reason unpractical—all that was the least bit too high for him or the least bit too deep for him—all that lay, though only by a little, beyond the immediate future with which he was dealing—he utterly drove from out of his mind; and his energies, condensed for the time upon some object to which they could be applied with effect, were brought to bear upon it with all their full volume and power. So, during the whole period of his reign at the Foreign Office, Lord Palmerston's method had been to be very strenuous in the pursuit of the object which might be needing care at any given time, without suffering himself to be embarrassed by what men call a 'comprehensive' view of our foreign policy; and although it was no doubt his concentrative habit of mind and his stirring temperament which brought him into this course of action, he was much supported in it by the people at home; for when no enterprise is on foot, the bulk of

CHAP. XXVI.

the English are prone to be careless of the friendship of foreign States, and are often much pleased when they are told that by reason of the activity of their Foreign Secretary they are without an ally in Europe.

Other statesmen had been accustomed to think that the principle which ought in general to determine the closeness of our relations with foreign States was 'community of interests;' and that in proportion as this principle was departed from, under the varied impulses of philanthropy or other like motives, disturbance, isolation, and danger would follow; but Lord Palmerston had never suffered this maxim to interfere with any special object which he might chance to have in hand at the moment, nor even with his desire to spread abroad the blessings of constitutional government.

As long as Lord Grey was at the head of the Government, the energy of the Foreign Office was kept down; and even after the first five years of Lord Melbourne's Administration the disruption towards which it was tending had made so little way, that when in 1840 the Ottoman Empire was threatened with ruin by France and her Egyptian ally, Lord Palmerston, with a majority of only two or three in the House of Commons, but having a bold heart and a firm steady hand, had been able to gather up the elements of the great alliance of 1814, and to prevent a European war by the very might and power and swiftness with which he executed his policy; but at the end of eleven more years,* when his career at the

* It is not forgotten that during a large portion of this last period Lord Aberdeen was at the Foreign Office, but he was of course much

Foreign Office was drawing to a close, his energy had cleared a space round him, and he seemed to be left standing alone.

His system by that time had fairly disclosed its true worth. Pursued with great vigour and skill, it had brought results corresponding with the numerous aims of its author, but corresponding also with his avowed disregard of a general guiding principle. Without breaking the general peace of Europe, it had produced a long series of diplomatic enterprises, pushed on in most instances to a successful issue; but, on the other hand, it had ended by making the Foreign Office an object of distrust, and in that way withdrawing England from her due place in the composition of the European system; for the good old safe clue of 'community of interests' being visibly discarded, no Power, however closely bound to us by the nature of things, could venture to rely upon our friendship. States whose interests in great European questions were exactly the same as our own, States which had always looked to the welfare and strength of England as main conditions of their own safety, found no more favour with us than those who consumed much of their revenue in preparing implements for the slaughter of Englishmen and the sinking of English ships. They were therefore obliged to shape their policy upon the supposition that any slight matter in which the Foreign Office

bound by what his predecessors had been doing before him; and, speaking roughly, it may be said that, from the spring of 1835 until the close of 1841, our foreign policy bore the impress of Lord Palmerston's mind. In the period between November 1830 and the autum of 1834, it was much governed by the then Prime Minister, Lord Grey.

CHAP. XXVI.

might chance to be interesting itself at the moment —nay, even a difference of opinion upon questions of internal government (and this, be it remembered, was an apple which could always be thrown)—would be enough to make England repulse them. From this cause, perhaps, more than from any other, there had sprung up in Germany that semblance of close friendship with the Court of St Petersburg which had helped to allure the Czar into dangerous paths.

From the Emperor Nicholas, Lord Palmerston was cut off, not only by differences arising out of questions on which the policy of Russia and of England might naturally clash, but also because he was looked upon as the promoter of doctrines which the Court of St Petersburg was accustomed to treat as revolutionary. Even to Austria, although we were close bound to her by common interests, although there was no one national interest which tended to divide us from her, he had in this way become antagonistic. He had too much lustiness of mind, too much simplicity of purpose, to be capable of living on terms of close intelligence with the philosophical statesmen of Berlin. To the accustomed foreign policy of French statesmen—in other words, to the France that he had been used to encounter in the Foreign Office—he was adverse by very habit. He spurned the whole invention of the French Republic. But his favourite hatred of all was his hatred of the House of Bourbon.* In short, by the

* This feeling probably drew its origin from the business of the 'Spanish Marriages.'

1st of December 1851, though still at the Foreign Office, he had become isolated in Europe. But fortune smiles on bold men. The next night Prince Louis Bonaparte and his fellow-venturers destroyed the French Republic, superseded the Bourbons, and suppressed France. Plainly this Prince and Lord Palmerston were men who could act together—could act together until the Prince should advise himself to deceive the English Minister. Not longer: not an hour beyond the time when the momentous promise which was made, if I mistake not, before the events of December, should remain unbroken.

So when the Czar began to encroach upon the Sultan there was nothing that could so completely meet Lord Palmerston's every wish as an alliance between the two Western Powers, which should toss France headlong into the English policy of upholding the Ottoman Empire; and the price of this was a price which, far from grudging, he would actually delight to pay; for desiring to have the Governments of France and England actively united together for an English object—desiring to prevent a revival of the French Republic—and, above all, to prevent a restoration of the House of Bourbon—he was only too glad to be able to strengthen the new Emperor's hold upon France by exalting his personal station, and giving him the support of a close, separate, and published alliance with the Queen of England. And in regard to the dislocation which such a new policy might work, he seems not to

CHAP. XXVI.

have set so high a value upon the existing framework of the European system as to believe that its destruction would be a portentous evil. If he thought it an evil at all, he thought it one which a strong man might repair. He yet lives, and now this very task is upon him. He meets it without suffering himself to be distracted by the remnant of any old illusion; he meets it, too, as becomes him, without shrinking or fear. A resolute people stand round him. Upon the issue of this, his last and mightiest labour, his fame, he well knows, will have to rest.

Lord Palmerston had been at the head of the Foreign Office during so many years of his life, and he had brought to bear upon its duties an activity so restless, and (upon the whole) so much steadfastness of purpose, that the more recent foreign policy of England, whether it had been right or whether it had been wrong, was in him almost incarnate. It was obvious, therefore, that whilst he was in the Cabinet he would always be resorted to for counsel upon foreign affairs by any of his colleagues who were not divided from him by strong difference of opinion, by political antagonism, or by personal dislike. Again, it was scarcely wise to believe that the relations which had subsisted between Lord Palmerston and the President of the French Republic would be closed by the fact that they had led to Lord Palmerston's dismissal from the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs. On the contrary, it was to be inferred that communications of a most

friendly kind would continue to pass between the French Emperor and an English Minister who had suffered for his sake; and the very same manliness of disposition which would prevent him from engaging in anything like an underhand intrigue against his colleagues, would make him refuse to sit dumb when, in words brought him fresh from the Tuileries, an ambassador came to talk to him of the Eastern Question, came to tell him that the new Emperor had an unbounded confidence in his judgment, wished to be governed by his counsels, and, in short, would dispose of poor France as the English Minister wished.

Here, then, was the real bridge by which French overtures of the more secret and delicate sort would come from over the Channel. Here was the bridge by which England's acceptance or rejection of all such overtures would go back to France.

Thus, from the ascendancy of his strong nature, from his vast experience, and from his command of the motive power which he could bring at any moment from Paris, Lord Palmerston, even so early as the spring of 1853, was the most puissant member of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet; and when, with all these sources of strength, he began to draw support from a people growing every day more and more warlike, he gained a complete dominion. If, after the catastrophe of Sinope, his colleagues had persevered in their attempt to resist him, he would have been able to overthrow them with ease upon the meeting of Parliament.

Therefore, in the transactions which brought on

CHAP. XXVI.

the war, Lord Palmerston was not drifting; he was joyfully laying his course. Whither he meant to go, thither he went; whither he chose that others should tend, thither they bent their reluctant way. If some immortal were to offer the surviving members of Lord Aberdeen's Government the privilege of retracing their steps with all the light of experience, every one of them perhaps, with only a single exception, would examine the official papers of 1853, in order to see where he could most wisely diverge from the course which the Cabinet took. Lord Palmerston would do nothing of the kind. What he had done before he would do again.

His way of masking the tendency of the Government.

Lord Palmerston's plan of masking the warlike tendency of the Government was an application to politics of an ingenious contrivance, which the Parisians used to employ in some of their street engagements with the soldiery. The contrivance was called a 'live barricade.' A body of the insurgents would seize the mayor of the arrondissement, and a priest (if they could get one), and also one or two respectable bankers devoted to the cause of peace and order. These prisoners, each forced to walk arm-in-arm between able-bodied combatants, were marched in front of a body of insurgents, which boldly advanced towards a spot where a battalion of infantry might be drawn up in close column of companies; but when they got to within hailing distance, one of the insurgents gifted with a loud voice would shout out to the troops: 'Soldiers! respect the cause of order!

'Don't fire on Mr Mayor! Respect property! Don't 'level your country's muskets at one who is a man 'and a brother, and also a respectable banker! Sol- 'diers! for the love of God don't imbrue your hands 'in the blood of this holy priest!' Confused by this appeal, and shrinking, as was natural, from the duty of killing peaceful citizens, the battalion would hesitate, and meantime the column of the insurgents, covered always by its live barricade, would rapidly advance and crowd in upon the battalion, and break its structure and ruin it. It was thus that Lord Palmerston had the skill to protrude Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone, and keep them standing forward in the van of a Ministry which was bringing the country into war. No one could assail Lord Palmerston's policy without striking at him through men whose conscientious attachment to the cause of peace was beyond the reach of cavil. CHAP. XXVI.

Debates upon the Address.

In the debates which took place upon the Address, the speeches of the unofficial members of Parliament in both Houses disclosed a strange want of acquaintance with the character and spirit of the negotiations which had been going on for the last eight months. Confiding in the peaceful tendency of a Government headed by Lord Aberdeen, and having Mr Gladstone for one of its foremost members, Mr Bright, in the summer of 1853, had deprecated all discussion; and, under his encouragement, the Government, after some hesitation, determined to withhold the production of the papers. With the lights which he then had, Mr Bright was perhaps entitled to believe that the

Parliament still in the dark as to the real tendency of the Government.

CHAP. XXVI.

course he took was the right one, and the intention of the Government was not only honest, but in some degree self-sacrificing; for it cannot be doubted that the disclosure of the able and high-spirited despatches of Lord Clarendon would have raised the Government in public esteem. It is now certain, however, that the disclosure of the papers in the August of 1853 would have enabled the friends of peace to take up a strong ground, to give a new turn to opinion whilst yet there was time, and to save themselves from the utter discomfiture which they underwent in the interval between the prorogation and the meeting of Parliament.

The Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen was not famous for its power of preventing the leakage of State matters; but the common indiscretion by which simple facts are noised abroad does not suffice to disclose the general tenor and bearing of a long and intricate negotiation. Besides, in the absence of means of authentic knowledge, there were circumstances which raised presumptions opposite to the truth. Of course the chief of these was the retention of office by two men whose attachment to the cause of peace was believed to be passionately strong; but it chanced, moreover, that publicity had been given to a highly-spirited and able despatch, the production of the French Foreign Office; and since there had transpired no proof of a corresponding energy on the part of England, it was wrongly inferred that Lord Aberdeen's Government were hanging back. Accordingly, Ministers were taunted for this sup-

posed fault by almost all the speakers in either House. What the Government were chargeable with was an undue forwardness in causing England to join with France alone in the performance of a duty which was European in its nature, and devolving in the first instance upon Austria. What they were charged with was a want of readiness to do that which they had done. Therefore every one who spoke against the Ministry was committing himself to opinions which (as soon as their real course of action should be disclosed) would involve him in an approval of their policy.

Production of the Papers.

But now at last, and within a day or two from the conclusion of the debate on the Address, some of the papers relating to the negotiations of 1853 and the preceding years were laid upon the table of both Houses. As soon as the more devoted friends of peace were able to read these documents, and in some degree to comprehend their scope and bearing, they began to see how their cause had fared under the official guardianship of Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone. They began to see that for near eight months the Government had been following a course of action which was gently leading towards war. They did not, however, make out the way in which the deflection began. They did not see that the way in which the Government had lapsed from the paths of peace, was by quitting the common ground of the four Powers for the sake of a closer union with one, and by joining with the French Emperor in making a perverse use of the fleets.

Their effect.

CHAP. XXVI.

Mr Cobden fastened upon the 'Vienna Note,' and, with his views, he was right in drawing attention to the apparent narrowness of the difference upon which the question of peace or war was made to depend; but he surely betrayed a want of knowledge of the way in which the actions of mankind are governed when he asked that a country now glowing with warlike ardour should go back and try to obtain peace by resuming a form of words which its Government had solemnly repudiated four months before. Of course this effort failed: it could not be otherwise. Any one acquainted with the tenor of the negotiations, and with enough of the surrounding facts to make the papers intelligible, may be able to judge whether there were not better grounds than this for making a stand against the war. The evil demanding redress was the intrusion of the Russian forces into Wallachia and Moldavia; and it would seem that the judgment to be pronounced by Parliament upon a Government which had led their country to the brink of war should have been made to depend upon this question:—

The question on which the judgment of Parliament should have been rested.

Was it practicable for England to obtain the deliverance of the Principalities by means taken in common with the rest of the four Powers, and without resorting to the expedient of a separate understanding with the French Emperor?

It may be that to this question the surviving members of Lord Aberdeen's Administration can establish a negative answer, but in order to do this they will have to make use of knowledge not hitherto disclosed to Parliament.

A belief, nay, even a suspicion, that there was danger of a sudden alliance between the French Emperor and the Czar, would gravely alter the conditions upon which Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet was called upon to form its judgment; but, so far as the outer world knows, no fear of this kind was coercing the Government. Upon the papers as they stand, it seems clear that, by remaining upon the ground occupied by the four Powers, England would have obtained the deliverance of the Principalities without resorting to war.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHAP. XXVII.

THE last of the steps which brought on the final rupture between Russia and the Western Powers was perhaps one of the most anomalous transactions which the annals of diplomacy have recorded. The outrage to be redressed was the occupation by Russia of Wallachia and Moldavia. Of all the States of Europe, except Turkey itself, the one most aggrieved by this occupation was Austria. Now Austria was one of the great Powers of Europe. She was essentially a military State; she was the mistress of a vast and well-appointed army; she was the neighbour of Russia. Geographically, she was so placed that (whatever perils she might bring upon her other frontiers) her mere order to her officer commanding her army of observation would necessarily force the Czar to withdraw his troops. On the other hand, France and England, though justly offended by the outrage, and though called upon in their character as two of the great Powers to concur in fit measures for suppressing it, were far from being brought into any grievous stress by the occupation of the far-distant Principalities;

and moreover, the evil, such as it was, was one which they could not dispel by any easy or simple application of force.

Austria proposes that France and England should summon the Czar to quit the Principalities, and threaten war as the result of his refusal.

It was in this condition of things that Austria suddenly conveyed to France, and through France to England, the intimation of the 22d of February. In conversation with Baron de Bourqueny, Count Buol said: 'If England and France will 'fix a day for the evacuation of the Principalities, 'the expiration of which shall be the signal for 'hostilities, the Cabinet of Vienna will support the 'summons.'* The telegraph conveyed the tenor of this intimation to London on the same day. Naturally, it was to be expected that Austria would join in a summons which she invited other Powers to send; and to this hour it seems hardly possible to believe that the Emperor of Austria deliberately intended to ask France and England to fix a day for going to war without meaning to go to war himself at the same time. Lord Clarendon, however, asked the question. Apparently he was not answered in terms corresponding with his question, but he was again told that Austria would 'support' the summons. Then, all at once, and without stipulating for the concurrence of the Power which was pressing them into action, the Governments of France and England prepared the instruments which were to bring them into a state of war with Russia.

Austria at this period had plainly resolved to go to war if the Principalities should not be relin-

* 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 53.

CHAP. XXVII.

quished by the Czar; but, before she could take the final step, it was necessary for her to come to an understanding with Prussia. This she succeeded in doing within twenty-four days from the period of the final rupture between Russia and the Western Powers; but France and England could not bear to wait. The French Emperor, rebuffed by the Czar in his endeavour to appear as the pacificator of Europe, was driven to the opposite method of diverting France from herself; and although the crisis was one in which a little delay and a little calmness would have substituted the coercive action of the four Powers for an adventurous war by the two, he once more goaded our Government on, and pressed it into instant action. M. Drouyn de Lhuys declared that, in his opinion, the sending of the proposed summons was a business which 'should be 'done immediately, and that the two Governments 'should write to Count Nesselrode to demand the 'immediate' withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Principalities—'the whole to be concluded by a 'given time, say the end of March.'* It must be owned, however, that the English people were pressing their Government in the same direction. Inflamed with a longing for naval glory in the Baltic, they had become tormented with a fear lest their Admiral should be hindered from great achievements for want of the mere legal formality which was to constitute a state of war. The majority of the Cabinet, though numbering on their side several of the foremost

Importance of avoiding haste.

Pressure of the French Emperor.

Eagerness of the people in England.

* 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 53.

statesmen of the day, were collectively too weak to help being driven by the French Emperor, too weak to help being infected by the warlike eagerness of the people, too weak to resist the strong man who was amongst them without being of them. It is likely enough that statesmen so gifted as some of them were, must have had better grounds for their way of acting than have been hitherto disclosed; but to one who only judges from the materials communicated to Parliament, it seems plain that at this time they had lost their composure.

The Government loses its composure.

By the summons despatched on the part of England, Lord Clarendon informed Count Nesselrode that unless the Russian Government, within six days from the delivery of the summons, should send an answer engaging to withdraw all its troops from the Principalities by the 30th of April, its refusal or omission so to do would be regarded by England as a declaration of war. This summons was in accordance with the suggestion of Austria; and what might have been expected was, that the Western Powers, in acceding to her wish, should do so upon the understanding that she concurred in the measure which she herself proposed, and that they would consult her as to the day on which it would be convenient for her to enter into a state of war; in other words, that they would consult her as to the day on which a continued refusal to quit the Principalities should bring the Czar into a state of war with Austria, France, and England. Instead of taking this course, Lord Clarendon forwarded the

The summons despatched by England.

CHAP. XXVII.

Instructions to the messenger.

summons (not as a draft or project, but as a document already signed and complete) to the Court of Vienna, and it was despatched by a messenger, who (after remaining for only a 'few hours' in the Austrian capital) was to carry on the summons to St Petersburg. Therefore Austria was made aware that, whether she was willing to defend her own interests or not, England was irrevocably committed to defend them for her; and instead of requiring that Austria should take part in the step which she herself had advised, Lord Westmorland was merely instructed to express a hope that the summons 'would meet with the approval' of the Austrian Cabinet, and that their opinion of it would be made known by Count Buol to the Cabinet of St Petersburg. Such a step as this on the part of Austria was preposterously short of what the Western Powers would have had a right to expect from her, if they had been a little less eager for hostilities, and had consulted her as to the time for coming to a rupture.

And to Lord Westmorland.

Austria not required to take part in the summons which she had herself suggested.

Of course the impatience of France and England was ruinous to the principle of maintaining concert between the four Powers; and what made it the more lamentable was, that it did not spring from any sound military views. It is true that the Western Powers were sending troops to the Levant and fitting out fleets for the Baltic; but there was nothing in the state of their preparations, nor in the position of the respective forces, which could justify their eagerness to accelerate the declaration of war.

CHAP. XXVII.

It chanced that, simultaneously with the arrival of the English messenger at Vienna, there came thither from St Petersburg the counter-propositions of Russia. Count Buol saw the importance of disposing of these before the summons went on to St Petersburg; so, after persuading Lord Westmorland to detain the English messenger, he instantly assembled the Conference of the four Powers. By this Conference the counter-propositions of Russia were unanimously rejected,* and the bearer of the summons carried this decision of the four Powers to St Petersburg, together with a despatch from the Austrian Government, instructing Count Esterhazy to support the summons, and throwing upon Russia the responsibility of the impending war.† The despatch, however, fell short of announcing that the refusal to quit the Principalities would place the Czar in a state of war with Austria as well as with the Western Powers. Prussia supported the summons in language corresponding with the language of the Vienna Cabinet. Baron Manteuffel's despatch to St Petersburg 'was drawn up in very pressing lan-'guage. It urged the Russian Government to con-'sider the dangers to which the peace of the world 'would be exposed by a refusal, and declared that 'the responsibility of the war which might be the 'consequence of that refusal would rest with the 'Emperor.'‡

The counter-proposals of Russia reach Vienna at the same time as the English messenger.

They are rejected by the Conference of the four Powers.

Austria and Prussia 'support' the summons, but without taking part in the step.

* 'The Conference unanimously agreed that it was impossible to 'proceed with those propositions.'—Protocol of Conference of March 5. 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 80.

† 'Eastern Papers,' part vii. p. 64. ‡ Ibid. p. 72.

CHAP. XXVII.

The summons addressed by France to the Russian Government was in the same terms as the summons despatched by Lord Clarendon, and was forwarded at the same time.

The French summons.

France and England brought into a state of war with Russia.

After receiving the summons of the two Governments, Count Nesselrode took the final orders of his master, and then informed the Consuls of France and England that the Emperor did not think fit to send any answer to their Notes. A refusal to answer was one of the events which, under the terms of the announcement contained in the summons, was to be regarded by the Western Powers as a declaration of war. This refusal was uttered by Count Nesselrode on the 19th of March 1854. The peace between the great Powers of Europe had lasted more than thirty-eight years, and now at length it was broken.

Message from the French Emperor to the Chambers.

On the 27th of March a message from the Emperor of the French informed his Senate and Legislative Assembly that the last determination of the Cabinet of St Petersburg had placed France and Russia in a state of war. In his speech from the throne at the opening of the session* he had already declared that war was upon the point of commencing. 'To avoid a conflict,' he said, 'I have gone 'as far as honour allowed. Europe now knows that 'if France draws the sword it is because she is con-'strained to do so. Europe knows that France has 'no idea of aggrandisement; she only wishes to 'resist dangerous encroachments. The time of con-

* March 2.

'quests has passed away, never to return. This 'policy has had for its result a more intimate alliance 'between England and France.' It is curious to observe that only a few hours after the time when England became inextricably engaged with him in a joint war against Russia, and in the same speech in which he announced the fact, the French Emperor acknowledged the value and the practicability of the wholesome policy which he had just then superseded by drawing the Cabinet of London into a separate alliance with himself; but when he was declaring, in words already quoted, that 'Germany had recovered 'her political independence, that Austria would enter 'into the alliance, and that the Western Powers 'would go to Constantinople along with Germany,' he had the happiness of knowing that the baneful summons which was to bring France and England into a separate course of action, and place them at last in a state of war, had been signed by the English Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was already on the way to St Petersburg.*

Message from the Queen to Parliament.

On the same 27th of March a message from the Queen announced to Parliament that the negotiations with Russia were broken off, and that her Majesty, feeling bound to give active aid to the Sultan, relied upon the efforts of her faithful subjects to aid her in protecting the states of the Sultan against the encroachments of Russia. On the following day the English declaration of war

Declaration of War.

* The messenger had reached Berlin on the day of the French Emperor's Speech from the throne.

CHAP. XXVII.

was issued. The labour of putting into writing the grounds for a momentous course of action is a wholesome discipline for statesmen; and it would be well for mankind if, at a time when the question were really in suspense, the friends of a policy leading towards war were obliged to come out of the mist of oral intercourse and private notes, and to put their view into a firm piece of writing. It does not follow that such a document ought necessarily to be disclosed, but it ought to exist, and it ought to be official. In the summer of 1853 the draft of a document, fairly stating the grounds of that singular policy of alliance within alliance which was shadowed out in the Royal Speech at the close of the session, would have been a good exercise for the members of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet, and would have protected them against that sensation of 'drifting,' which was afterwards described by the Foreign Secretary. It is known that when the English declaration announcing the rupture with Russia was about to be prepared, it was found less easy than might be supposed to assign reasons for the war. The necessity of having to state the cause of the rupture in a solemn and precise form, disclosed the vice of the policy which the Government was following; for it could not be concealed that the grievance which was inducing France and England to take up arms was one of an European kind, which called for redress at the hands of the four Powers rather than for the armed championship of the two.

Difficulty of framing it.

Of course the difficulty was overcome. When the

faith of the country was pledged, and fleets and armies already moving to the scene of the conflict, it was not possible that war would be stayed for want of mere words. The Queen was advised to declare, that, by the regard due to an ally, and to an empire whose integrity and independence were essential to the peace of Europe, by the sympathies of her people for the cause of right against injustice, and from a desire to save Europe from the preponderance of a Power which had violated the faith of treaties, she felt called upon to take up arms, in concert with the Emperor of the French, for the defence of the Sultan.

The Czar's declaration and War manifesto.

On the 11th of April the Emperor of Russia issued his declaration of war. He declared that the summons addressed to him by France and England took from Russia all possibility of yielding with honour; and he threw the responsibility of the war upon the Western Powers. It was for Central and Western Europe that diplomacy shaped these phrases; but in the manifesto addressed to his own people the Czar used loftier words. 'Russia,' said he, 'fights 'not for the things of this world, but for the Faith.'* 'England and France have ranged themselves by the 'side of the enemies of Christianity against Russia 'fighting for the Orthodox faith. But Russia will 'not alter her divine mission; and if enemies fall 'upon her frontier, we are ready to meet them with 'the firmness which our ancestors have bequeathed 'to us. Are we not now the same Russian nation of

* 23d April.

CHAP. XXVII.

'whose deeds of valour the memorable events of 1812 'bear witness? May the Almighty assist us to prove 'this by deeds! And in this trust taking up arms 'for our persecuted brethren professing the Christian 'faith, we will exclaim with the whole of Russia with 'one heart, "O Lord our Saviour, whom have we '"to fear?" "May God arise and His enemies be '"dispersed!"'*

The Czar's invasion of Turkey is commenced.

On the fourth day after the delivery of the message which placed Russia in a state of war with France and England, Prince Gortschakoff passed the Lower Danube at three points, and, entering into the desolate region of the Dobrudja, began the invasion of Turkey.†

Treaty between the Sultan and the Western Powers.

Nearly at the same time France and England entered into a treaty with the Sultan, by which they engaged to defend Turkey with their arms until the conclusion of a peace guaranteeing the independence of the Ottoman Empire and the rights of the Sultan, and upon the close of the war to withdraw all their forces from the Ottoman territory. The Sultan, on his part, undertook to make no separate peace or armistice with Russia.‡

Treaty between France and England.

On the 10th of April 1854 there was signed that treaty of alliance between France and England which many men had suffered themselves to look

* 21st February.

† 24th March. By thus passing that part of the river which encloses the Dobrudja, a general does not effect much. He must cross it at and above Rassova before he can be said, in the military sense, to have 'broken through the line of the Danube.'

‡ 10th of March.

upon as a security for the peace of Europe. The high contracting parties engaged to do what lay in their power for the re-establishment of a peace which should secure Europe against the return of the existing troubles; and in order to set free the Sultan's dominions, they promised to use all the land and sea forces required for the purpose. They engaged to receive no overture tending to the cessation of hostilities, and to enter into no engagement with the Russian Court, without having deliberated in common. They renounced all aim at separate advantages, and they declared their readiness to receive into their alliance any of the other Powers of Europe.

This great alliance did not carry with it so resistless a weight as to be able to execute justice by its own sheer force, and without the shedding of blood; but it was a mighty engine of war.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Recapitulation.

Standing causes of disturbance.

Effect of personal government by the Czar.

THE train of causes which brought on the war has now been followed down to the end. Great armies kept on foot, and empires governed by princes without the counsel of statesmen, were spoken of in the outset as standing elements of danger to the cause of peace; and their bearing upon the disputes of nations has been seen in all the phases of a strife which began in a quarrel for a key and a trinket, and ended by embroiling Europe. Upon the destinies of Russia the effect of this system of mere personal government has been seen at every step. From head to foot a vast empire was made to throb with the passions which rent the bosom of the one man Nicholas. If for a few months he harboured ambition, the resources of the State were squandered in making ready for war. If his spirit flagged, the ambition of the State fell lame, and preparations ceased. If he laboured under a fit of piety, or rather of ecclesiastic zeal, All the Russias were on the verge of a crusade. He chafed with rage at the thought of

being foiled in diplomatic strife by the second Canning; and instantly, without hearing counsel from any living man, he caused his docile battalions to cross the frontier, and kindled a bloody war.

By the Emperor of Austria.

Nor was the personal government of the Emperor Francis Joseph without its share of mischief; for it seems clear that this was the evil course by which Austria was brought into measures offensive to the Sultan, but full of danger to herself. More than once, in the autumn of 1852, Nicholas and Francis Joseph came together; and at these ill-omened meetings, the youthful Kaiser, bending, it would seem, under a weight of gratitude—overwhelmed by the personal ascendancy of the Czar—and touched, as he well might be, by the affection which Nicholas had conceived for him—was led perhaps to use language which never would have been sanctioned by a cabinet of Austrian statesmen; and although it is understood that he abstained from actual promises, it is hard to avoid believing that the general tenor of the young Emperor's conversations with Nicholas must have been the chief cause which led the Czar to imagine that he could enter upon a policy highly dangerous to Austria, and yet safely count upon her assent. The Czar never could have hoped that Austrian councillors of state would have willingly stood still and endured his seizure of the country of the Lower Danube from Orsova down to the Euxine; but he understood that Francis Joseph governed Austria, and he imagined that he could govern Francis Joseph as though

CHAP. XXVIII.

he were his own child. 'He could reckon,' he said, 'upon Austria.'*

By the King of Prussia.

Even in Prussia the policy of the State seemed to be always upon the point of being shaken by the fears of the King; and although, up to the outbreak of the war, she was guilty of no defection,† it is certain that the anticipation of finding weakness in this quarter was one of the causes which led the Czar into danger.

By the French Emperor.

In France, after the events of the 2d of December, the system of personal government so firmly obtained, that the narrator — dispensed from the labour of inquiring what interests she had in the question of peace and war, and what were the thoughts of her orators, her statesmen, and her once illustrious writers—was content to see what scheme of action would best conduce to the welfare and safety of a small knot of men then hanging together in Paris; and when it appeared that, upon the whole, these persons would gain in safety and comfort from the disturbance of Europe, and from a close understanding with England, the subsequent progress of the story was singularly unembarrassed by any question about what might be the policy demanded by the interests or the sentiments of France. Therefore the bearing of personal government upon the maintenance of peace was better illustrated by the French Government than by the

* Memorandum by the Emperor of Russia, delivered to the English Government *ubi ante.*

† It was more than three months after the outbreak of the war that Prussia halted.

Emperor Nicholas; for in the Czar, after all, a vast people was incarnate. His ambition, his piety, his anger, were in a sense the passions of the devoted millions of men of whom he was indeed the true chief. The French Emperor, on the contrary, when he chose to carry France into a war against Russia, was in no respect the champion of a national policy nor of a national sentiment; and he therefore gave a vivid example of the way in which sheer personal government comes to bear upon the peace of the world.

Share which Russia had in bringing about the War.

Perhaps if a man were to undertake to distribute the blame of the war, the first Power he would arraign might be Russia. Her ambition, her piety, and her Church zeal were ancient causes of strife, which were kindled into a dangerous activity by the question of the Sanctuaries, and by events which seemed for a moment to show that the time for her favourite enterprise against Constantinople might now at last be coming. Until the month of March 1853, these causes were brought to bear directly against the tranquillity of Europe; and even after that time they were in one sense the parents of strife, because, though they ceased to have a direct action upon events, they had set other forces in motion. But it would be wrong to believe that, after the middle of March 1853, Russia was acting in furtherance of any scheme of territorial aggrandisement; for it is plain that by that time the Czar's vague ambition had dwindled down into a mere wish to wring from the Porte a protectorate of the Greek Church

CHAP. XXVIII.

in Turkey. He had gathered his troops upon the Turkish frontier, and it seemed to him that he could use their presence there as a means of extorting an engagement which would soothe the pride of the Orthodox Church, and tighten the rein by which he was always seeking to make the Turks feel his power. The vain concealments and misrepresentations by which this effort of violent diplomacy was accompanied, were hardly worthy to be ranked as acts of statecraft, and were rather the discord produced by the clashing impulses of a mind in conflict with itself.

Originally the Czar had no thought of going to war for the sake of obtaining this engagement, and least of all had he any thought of going to war with England. At first he thought to obtain it by surprise; and, when that attempt failed, he still hoped to obtain it by resolute pressure, because he reckoned that if the great Powers would compare the slenderness of the required concession with the evils of a great war, there could be no question how they would choose.

As soon as the diplomatic strife at Constantinople began to work, the Czar got heated by it; and when at length he found himself not only contending for his Church, but contending too with his ancient enemy, he so often lost all self-command, that what he did in his politic intervals was never enough to undo the evil which he wrought in his fits of pious zeal and of rage. And when, with a cruel grace, and before the eyes of all Europe, Lord Stratford

disposed of Prince Mentschikoff, it must be owned that it was hard for a proud man in the place of the Czar to have to stand still and submit. Therefore, without taking counsel of any man, he resolved to occupy the Principalities; but he had no belief that even that grave step would involve him in war; for his dangerous faith in Lord Aberdeen and in the power of the English Peace Party was in full force, and grew to a joyful and ruinous certainty when he learned that the Queen's Prime Minister had insisted upon revoking the grave words which had been uttered to Baron Brunnow by the Secretary of State. This illusory faith in the peacefulness of England long continued to be his guide; and from time to time he was confirmed in his choice of the wrong path by the bearing of the persons who represented France, Austria, and Prussia at the Court of St Petersburg; for although in Paris, in London, in Vienna, in Berlin, and in Constantinople the four great Powers seemed strictly united in their desire to restrain the encroachments of the Czar, this wholesome concord was so masked at St Petersburg by the demeanour of Count Mensdorf, Colonel Rochow, and M. Castelbajac, that Sir Hamilton Seymour, though uttering the known opinion of the other three Powers as well as of his own Government, was left to stand alone.

After his acceptance of the Vienna Note, the Emperor Nicholas enjoyed for a few days the bliss of seeing all Europe united with him against the Turks, and he believed perhaps that Heaven was

CHAP. XXVIII.

favouring him once more, and that now at last 'Canning' was vanquished; but in a little while the happy dream ceased, and he had the torment of hearing the four Powers confess that, if for a moment they had differed from Lord Stratford, it was because of their erring nature. Then, fired by the Turkish declaration of war, and stung to fury by the hostile use of the Western fleets which the French Emperor had forced upon the English Government, the Czar gave the fatal orders which brought about the disaster of Sinope. After his first exultation over the sinking of the ships and the slaughter, he apparently saw his error, and was become so moderate as to receive in a right spirit the announcement of the first decision that had been taken by the English Cabinet when the news of the catastrophe reached it. But only a few days later he had to hear of the grave and hostile change of view which had been forced upon Lord Aberdeen's Government by the French Emperor, and to learn that, by resolving to drive the Russian flag from the Euxine, the maritime Powers had brought their relations with his empire to a state barely short of war. After this rupture it was no longer possible for him to extricate himself decorously, unless by exerting some skill and a steady command of temper. He was unequal to the trial; and although, in politic and worldly moments, he must have been almost hopeless of a good result, he could not bear to let go his hold of the occupied provinces under the compulsion of a public threat laid upon him by England and France.

CHAP. XXVIII

Share which Turkey had in causing it

With the conduct of the Turkish Government little fault is to be found. It is true that, in the early stage of the dispute about the Sanctuaries, the violence of the French and the Russian Governments tormented the Porte into contradictory engagements, and that the anger kindled by these clashing promises was one of the provocatives of the war; but from the day of the delivery of the Bethlehem key and the replacement of the star, the Turkish Government was almost always moderate and politic — and after the second week of March 1853 it was firm; for the panic struck by Prince Mentschikoff in the early days of his mission was allayed by the prudent boldness of Colonel Rose, and the Czar with all his hovering forces was never able to create a second alarm.

It has been seen that, by their tenacity of all those sovereign rights which were of real worth—by the wisdom with which they yielded wherever they could yield with honour and safety—by their invincible courtesy and deference towards their mighty assailant—and at last, and above all, by their warlike ardour and their prowess in the field—the Turks had become an example to Christendom, and had won the heart of England. And although it has been acknowledged that some of the more gentle of these Turkish virtues were contrived and enforced by the English Ambassador, still no one can fairly refuse to the Ottoman people the merit of appreciating and enduring this painful discipline.

Besides, there was a period when it might be supposed that the immediate views of the Turkish

CHAP. XXVIII.

Government and of the English Ambassador were not exactly the same; for as soon as the Turkish statesmen became aware that their appeal to the people had kindled a spirit which was forcing them into war, it of course became their duty to endeavour to embroil the other Powers of Europe; and they laboured in this direction with much sagacity and skill. They saw that if they could contrive to bring up the Admirals from Besika Bay, the Western Powers would soon get decoyed into war by their own fleets; and in order to this, we saw Reshid Pasha striving to affect the lofty mind of Lord Stratford by shadowing out the ruin of the Ottoman dominion; then mounting his horse, going off to the French Ambassador, and so changing the elevation of his soul, whilst he rode from one Embassy to the other, that in the presence of M. de la Cour he no longer spoke of a falling empire, but pictured to him a crowd of Frenchmen of all ranks cruelly massacred, on account of their well-known Christianity, by a host of fanatical Moslems. And although the serenity of Lord Stratford defeated the sagacious Turk for the time, and disappointed him in his endeavour to bring up more than a couple of vessels from each fleet, still in the end the Turkish statesmanship prevailed; for M. de la Cour, disturbed by the bloody prospect held out to him, communicated his excitement to the French Emperor, and the French Emperor, as we have seen, then put so hard a pressure upon Lord Aberdeen as to constrain him to join in breaking through the treaty of 1841; and since this re-

solve led straight into the series of naval movements which followed, and so on to the outbreak of war, the members of the Sultan's Cabinet had some right to believe that, even without the counsels of the great Ambassador, they knew how to govern events.

Share which Austria had.

In so far as the origin of the war was connected with Count Leiningen's mission, Austria is answerable; and although it must needs be true (for so she firmly declares*) that the Czar's reiterated account of his close understanding with her in regard to Montenegro was purely fabulous, she still remains open to the grave charge of having sent Count Leiningen to Constantinople armed with a long string of questionable claims, yet debarred by his orders from all negotiation, and instructed to receive no answer from the Turkish Government except an answer of simple consent or simple refusal. This offensive method of pressing upon an independent Sovereign was constantly referred to by the Czar as justifying and almost compelling his determination to deal with the Sultan in a high-handed fashion; and in this way (even upon the supposition of there being no pernicious understanding between the two

* I have a statement to this effect. To those who have not been called upon to test the relative worth of statements coming from different parts of Europe, it may seem that I am facile in accepting this one; and the more so when I acknowledge, as I do, that surrounding facts give an appearance of probability to the opposite assertion. The truth is that, like our own countrymen, the public men of Austria are much accustomed to subordinate their zeal for the public service to their self-respect. To undertake to disbelieve a statesman of the Court of Vienna, is the same thing as to undertake to disbelieve an English gentleman.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Emperors) Count Leiningen's mission had an ill effect upon the maintenance of peace.

Again, Austria must bear the blame of employing servants who, notwithstanding the firm and right part which she took in the negotiations, were always causing her to appear before Europe as a Power subservient to the Czar; and especially she ought to suffer in public repute for the baneful effect produced at St Petersburg by Count Mensdorf's shameful presence at the thanksgivings which the Czar and his people offered up to the Almighty for the sinking of the ships and the slaughter of the Turks at Sinope.

There is also a fault of omission for which it would seem that Austria is chargeable. The interests of Austria and England, both present and remote, were so strictly the same, that for the welfare of both States there ought to have been going on between them a constant interchange of friendly counsels. Our statesmen are accustomed to proffer advice without stint to foreign States, but it is remarkable that their frankness is not much reciprocated by words of friendly counsel from abroad. Yet there are times when such counsels might be wholesome. It would surely have been well if Austria had advised the English Government not to quit the safe, honest ground held by the four Powers, for the sake of an adventure with the new Bonaparte. There is no trace of any such warnings from Vienna; and indeed it would seem that Austria, tormented by the presence of the Russian forces on her southern frontier, was

more prone to encourage than to restrain the imprudence of her old ally.

In other respects Austria discharged her duty.

These were the faults with which Austria may fairly be charged. In other respects she was not forgetful of her duty towards herself and towards Europe; and it has been seen that, from the day when the Czar crossed the Pruth down to the time when he was obliged to relinquish his hold, Austria persisted in taking the same view of the dispute as was taken by the Western Powers, and was never at all backward in her measures for the deliverance of the Principalities.

Share which Prussia had in causing the War.

In the nature and temperament of the King of Prussia there was so much of weakness that his Imperial brother-in-law was accustomed to speak of him in terms of ruthless disdain; and it seems that this habit of looking down upon the King caused the Czar to shape his policy simply as though Prussia were null. When he found his Royal brother-in-law engaged against him in an offensive and defensive alliance, he perhaps understood the error which he had committed in assuming that the policy of an enlightened and a high-spirited nation would be steadily subservient to the weakness of its Sovereign; but until he was thus undeceived, or, at all events, until the failure of Baron Budberg's mission in the beginning of 1854, he seems to have closed his eyes to all the long series of public acts in which Prussia had engaged, and to have cheated himself into the belief that she would never take up such a ground as might enable Austria to act freely on her

CHAP. XXVIII.

southern frontier, and so drive him out of the Principalities. And although, until after the outbreak of the war between Russia and the Western Powers, Prussia did not at all hang back,* it is nevertheless true that the Czar's policy was shaped upon a knowledge of the King's weak nature. Therefore the temperament and mental quality of the Prussian monarch must be reckoned among the causes of the war.

Prussia also, in the same degree as Austria, must bear the kind of repute that was entailed upon her by the conduct of her representative; and the name of Colonel Rochow, and his thanksgiving for the slaughter of Sinope, will long be remembered against her.

Another fault attributable to Prussia was her invincible love of metaphysical or rather mere verbal refinements. When this form of human error is brought into politics it chills all human sympathies, and tends to bring a country into contempt, by giving to its policy the bitter taste of a theory or a doctrine, and so causing it to be misunderstood. An instance of this vice was given by the First Minister of the Prussian Crown, in a speech of great moment which he addressed to the Lower Chamber on the 18th of March 1854. After an abundance of phrases of a pacific tendency, Baron Manteuffel said that Prussia was resolved 'faithfully to aid 'any member of the Confederation who, from his

* The state of war began on the 19th of March. Prussia first began to hang back about the 21st of July. See *ante*.

'geographical position, might feel himself called upon 'sooner than Prussia to draw the sword in defence 'of German interests.' Now this, to the ear of any diplomatist, foreshadowed, or rather announced, an offensive and defensive alliance with Austria against the Czar for the delivery of the Principalities; and accordingly, the alliance so announced was actually contracted by Prussia some four weeks afterwards. But, in the minds of the common public, a disclosure couched in this diplomatic phraseology was smothered under the intolerable weight of the pacific verbiage which had gone before; and the result was, that a speech which announced a measure of offence and hostility to Russia was looked upon as the disclosure of a halting, timid, and worthless policy.

In other respects Prussia discharged her duty.

But, except upon the grounds here stated, there was no grave fault to find with the policy of Prussia down to the outbreak of the war between the Czar and the Western Powers. Distant as she was from the scene of the Czar's encroachment, she was nevertheless compelled, as she valued her hold upon the goodwill of Germany, to be steadfast in hindering Russia from establishing herself in provinces which would give her the full control of the Lower Danube; and up to the time of the final rupture she always so accommodated her policy to the views of the Western Powers as to be able to remain in firm accord with them, both as to the adjudication of the dispute between Russia and Turkey, and as to the principles which should guide the belligerents in

CHAP. XXVIII.

the event of their being forced into a war by the obstinacy of the Emperor Nicholas.

Of course the Czar's relinquishment of the Principalities took away from Prussia, as well as from Austria, her ground of complaint against the Czar, and with it her motive for action. Nor was this all; for by determining to quit the mainland of Europe and make a descent upon a remote maritime province of Russia, the Western Powers deprived themselves of all right to expect that Austria and Prussia would favour a scheme of invasion which they did not and could not approve. Down to the time when the Czar determined to repass the Pruth, the policy followed by Prussia, as well as by Austria, was sound and loyal towards Europe.

As did also the German Confederation.

The German Confederation was brought into the same views as Austria and Prussia; and thus, so long as the object in view was the deliverance of the Principalities, the whole of Central Europe was joined with the great Powers of the West in a determination to repress the Czar's encroachments. I repeat that the papers laid before the Parliament have not yet disclosed the ground on which the English Government became discontent with this vast union, and was led to contract those separate engagements with the Emperor of the French which ended by bringing on the war.

Share which the French Government had in causing the War.

The blame of beginning the dispute which led on to the war must rest with the French Government; for it is true, as our Foreign Secretary declared, that 'the Ambassador of France at Constantinople was

'the first to disturb the status quo in which the 'matter rested, and without political action on the 'part of France, the quarrels of the Churches would 'never have troubled the relations of friendly 'Powers.'* For this offence against the tranquillity of Europe the President of the Republic was answerable in the first instance; but it must be remembered that at the time France was under a free Parliamentary Government; and it is just, therefore, to acknowledge that the blame of sanctioning the disinterment of a forgotten treaty more than a hundred years old, and of violently using it as an instrument of disturbance, must be shared by an Assembly which had not enough of the statesmanlike quality to be able to denounce a wanton and noxious policy. It was the weakness of the gifted statesmen and orators who then adorned the Chambers that, like most of their countrymen, they were too easily fascinated by the pleasure of seeing France domineer.

But at the close of the year 1851 the France known to Europe and the world was bereaved of political life; and thenceforth her complex interests in the affairs of nations were so effectually overruled by the exigency of personal considerations, that in a little while she was made to adopt an Anglo-Turkish policy, and, as the price of this concession to the views of our Foreign Office, the venturers of the 2d of December were brought under the sanctions of an alliance with the Queen of England. It has

* *Ubi ante.*

CHAP. XXVIII.

been seen that, by superseding that conjoint action of the four Powers which was the true safeguard of peace and justice, the separate compact of the two became a main cause of the appeal to arms. Moreover, it has been shown how, when once he had entangled Lord Aberdeen's Government in this understanding, the French Emperor gained so strong a hold over it that he became able to guide and overrule the counsels of England even in the use to be made of her Mediterranean fleet; and how thenceforth, and from time to time, he so used the English navy as well as his own, that at the moments when the negotiations seemed ripe for peace they were always defeated by an order sent out to the Admirals. The real tendency of this perturbing and dislocating course of action was concealed by the moderation which characterised the French despatches, and, in another and very different way, by the demeanour of the personage who represented the French Government at St Petersburg; so that, at the very times when Lord Aberdeen was brought to consent to a hostile and provoking use of our naval forces, he was able to derive fatal comfort from the language of the French diplomacy; and whenever the grave tone of Sir Hamilton Seymour was beginning to produce wholesome effect at St Petersburg, his efforts were quickly baffled by the prostrations of his French colleague.

It was thus that, by generating the original dispute—by drawing England from the common ground of the four Powers into a separate understanding

with himself—by causing a persistently hostile use to be made of the fleets, and, finally, by his ambiguous ways of speaking and acting—the French Emperor came to have a chief share in the kindling of the war.

Share which England had in causing it.

The stake which England holds in the world makes it of deep moment to her to avert disorder among nations; and, on the other hand, her insular station in Europe, joined with the possession of more than sufficing empire in other regions of the world, keeps her clear of all thought of territorial aggrandisement in this quarter of the globe. And although it is the duty of all the rest of the great Powers as well as of England to endeavour towards the maintenance of peace and order, yet, inasmuch as there is no other great State without some sort of lurking ambition which may lead it into temptation, the fidelity of the Continental guardians of the peace can always be brought into question. Suspicions of this kind are often fanciful, but the fears from which they spring are too well founded in the nature of things to be safely regarded as frivolous; and the result is, that the great island Power is the one which, by the well-informed statesmen of the Continent, is looked to as the surest safeguard against wrong. Europe leans, Europe rests, on this faith. So, the moment it is made to appear that for any reason England is disposed to abdicate, or to suspend for a while, the performance of her European duties, that moment the wrong-doer sees his opportunity and begins to stir. Those who dread him, missing the accustomed

CHAP. XXVIII.

safeguard of England, turn whither they can for help, and, failing better plans of safety, they perhaps try hard to make terms with the spoiler. Monarchs find that to conspire for gain of territory, or to have other princes conspiring against them, is the alternative presented to their choice. The system of Europe becomes decomposed, and war follows. Therefore, exactly in proportion as England values the peace of Europe, she ought to abstain from every word and from every sign which tends to give the wrong-doer a hope of her acquiescence. Unhappily this duty was not understood by the more ardent friends of peace; and they imagined that they would serve their cause by entreating England to abstain from every conflict which did not menace their own shores—nay, even by permitting themselves to vow and declare that this was the policy truly loved by the English race. Moreover, by blending their praises of peace with fierce invective against public men, they easily drew applause from assembled multitudes, and so caused the foreigner to believe that they really spoke the voice of a whole people, or at all events of great masses, and that England was no longer a Power which would interfere with spoliation in Europe. The fatal effect which this belief produced upon the peace of Europe has been shown. But the evil produced by the excesses of the Peace Party did not end there. It is the nature of excesses to beget excesses of strange complexion; and just as a too rigid sanctity has always been followed by a too scandalous profligacy, so, by the law of reaction, the doctrines of

the Peace Party tended to bring into violent life that keen warlike spirit which soon became one of the main obstacles to the restoration of tranquillity. Therefore England, it must be acknowledged, did much to bring on the war; first, by the want of moderation and prudence with which she seemed to declare her attachment to the cause of peace—and afterwards by the exceeding eagerness with which she coveted the strife.

We have seen the steps by which England was brought from her seeming peacefulness into a temper impatiently warlike; but, considering the much-avowed attachment of England to the maintenance of peace—the indirect, not to say remote, way in which the Eastern dispute came to bear upon English interests—and, on the other hand, the immense concurrence of opinion which sanctioned and at last almost compelled the appeal to arms,—it is hard at first sight to understand how it came to happen that the cause of peace was, not merely defeated, but brought to ruin. The truth is, that in a free country the fate of a cause must depend for the time on its leaders; and if several of the foremost of these chance to stumble and fall disabled at nearly the same time, they leave their followers helpless. Now, the more strenuous lovers of peace had placed their trust in four men; and it might seem, at first sight, that any political cause would at least be safe from ruin when under the charge of Lord Aberdeen the Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, besides these, Mr Cobden and Mr

CHAP. XXVIII.

Bright, two of the most gifted orators in the country with seats in the House of Commons.

Loving peace, with a purity of motive and a devotedness of heart which no man has ever questioned, Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone had the misfortune to remain members of a Government which went out of the safe paths of peace. They went wrong; and although it is true that they went wrong at a slow rate, still they so moved for a period of eight months; and at last, to their grief and dismay, they found that they had been leading the country into a cruel war. Deceived by the crude notion that France and England, acting together, could secure peace, they did not understand that the way to maintain peace and order was to hold to the alliance of the four Powers, and to avoid impairing it by a separate understanding with one of them. For want of this guiding principle they always failed to see the point at which they could make their stand, and they never could choose the day on which it would become them to retire from office. So they lingered on in a Cabinet which was becoming more and more warlike, and their presence there was in two ways hurtful to the cause of peace —for even the more earnest friends of peace were quieted by seeing that the trusted champions of the cause were still members of the Government; and at last, when they could no longer help seeing that this same Government was going to a rupture with the Czar, the more rational of them thought that there must really be some great State necessity for a war

in which Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone were reluctantly engaging their country. Moreover, there was a great and good portion of the community who, retaining their theoretic disapproval of a needless war, were nevertheless fired with a secret longing for the clash of arms; and these men were relieved from the pain of a conflict between duty and inclination by finding that for the righteousness of the impending war Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone were their sponsors.

It has been seen also that, by their continuance in office, these two statesmen kept alive in the mind of the Emperor Nicholas that dangerous belief which has often been a source of European troubles—the belief that England would not go to war. The Czar's belief on this subject was so sweet to him, that perhaps nothing short of the resignation of the Prime Minister could have undeceived him. Still, to a common observer, it would seem that some effort might have been made to disperse the error which Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone had graven into the mind of the Czar by consenting to remain in office; and that, as the danger was caused in great measure by the continuance of old impressions upon the mind of the Emperor Nicholas, a special mission to St Petersburg might have been usefully resorted to as a means of rousing the Czar to a sense of the danger which was threatening his relations with England. Nothing of this kind was done; nothing was done to break the fatal smoothness of the incline.

CHAP. XXVIII.

But if the cause of peace was paralysed by the friends whom it had in the Cabinet, it was brought to mere extinction by the disqualification inflicted upon its popular leaders as the result of their former excesses.

Mr Cobden and Mr Bright, as we have seen, had shut themselves out from the counsels of the nation. They were powerless. By their indiscriminate denunciations of war in general, they had destroyed the worth of any criticism which they might be able to bring to bear upon the pending dispute. Their arguments, however well pruned and shaped out to suit the occasion, were sure of being treated by an English audience as the offspring of their doctrines; and their doctrines being repudiated, they could make no good use of their privilege of speech. It was impossible to consult with them upon the question whether the country was bound in honour to take up arms for the Sultan, because they had spent their lives in teaching that the country could never be bound in honour to take up arms for anybody. If they had not thus disqualified themselves for useful argument, they would surely have been able to make a becoming stand against what Count Nesselrode called 'the most unintelligible war' ever known. But because they had been extravagant before, therefore now they were null; and because they were null, the cause intrusted to their hands was brought to destruction.

The whole Cabinet of Lord Aberdeen must share the responsibility of that ill-fated policy which

brought England to cast aside the blessings insured by the unanimity of the four Powers, and to enter into a separate understanding with France. It is true that, because this policy was novel and adventurous, it was highly approved by a people glowing with warlike ardour, and seeking for fields of enterprise; but although for the time an Administration may be thus borne harmless, it would be wrong to allow that in questions of high policy the complicity of the public has power to absolve. A Minister who has fashioned out a new policy leading his country into a war ought to be able to show—not necessarily that the policy was a wise one (for man is of an erring nature), but—that at the time of its adoption there were better grounds than its mere popularity for believing it to be right. That some such grounds exist may be fairly imagined by those who have heard of the ability and the varied experience of the members of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet; but hitherto, so far as I know, these grounds have not been disclosed.

Again, blame attaches upon Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet for yielding up its own better judgment under pressure from the French Government, and consenting to those hostile movements of the Allied fleets which baffled the patient labours of diplomacy, and twice rekindled the strife. When the warlike spirit in England had once arisen, the French Emperor knew that he could at any moment subject Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet to an access of popular disfavour by causing or allowing it to appear in

CHAP. XXVIII.

England that the Government of the Queen was less eager than himself in the defence of the Sultan; and it is true, therefore, that although the hand which touched the lever was foreign, the instrument of pressure was English. It is probably true, also, that the pressure was never inflicted without the consent of at least one great English Statesman. Still, because this facile yielding to the French Emperor in the use of naval forces was popular, or rather was a means of avoiding unpopularity, the propriety of it is not the less in question. It is possible, however, that the hitherto unknown grounds on which the separate understanding with France may come to be defended will extend to justify the plan of deferring in naval transactions to the Emperor of the French, and consenting at his instance to make our fleet an instrument for the disturbance of the pending negotiations.

In so far as concerns the general policy of the Government in these transactions, the merits of Lord Clarendon must be tried, of course, by the tests applicable to the whole body of the Cabinet; but it has been seen that, personally, he was not blind to the danger of allowing the Czar to continue in his belief of England's insuperable peacefulness; and that his firm, wholesome words were flying, as they say, to St Petersburg* when unhappily they were

* I have avoided the obvious step by which this statement might be verified or disproved, because it seemed to me that a question upon the subject would be hardly fair; and I have preferred, therefore, to give it under cover of the *ὡς φασιν*. I do not, however, doubt that it is true.

revoked at the instance of Lord Aberdeen. Lord Clarendon's despatches were written with so much of grace and vigour, and in a tone so fair and manly, that any one who is familiar with them will understand something of the process by which Lord Aberdeen was from time to time forced into an approval of these able writings, and in that way hindered from finding the happy moment in which he could establish his divergence from the governing member of the Cabinet and effect his retreat from office.

The volitions which governed events.

Looking back upon the troubles which ended in the outbreak of war, one sees the nations at first swaying backward and forward like a throng so vast as to be helpless, but afterwards falling slowly into warlike array. And when one begins to search for the man or the men whose volition was governing the crowd, the eye falls upon the towering form of the Emperor Nicholas. He was not single-minded, and therefore his will was unstable, but it had a huge force; and since he was armed with the whole authority of his Empire, it seemed plain that it was this man, and only he, who was bringing danger from the North. And at first, too, it seemed that within his range of action there was none who could be his equal; but in a little while the looks of men were turned to the Bosphorus, for thither his ancient adversary was slowly bending his way. To fit him for the encounter, the Englishman was clothed with little authority except what he could draw from the resources of his own mind and from the strength of

CHAP. XXVIII.

his own wilful nature. Yet it was presently seen that those who were near him fell under his dominion, and did as he bid them, and that the circle of deference to his will was always increasing around him; and soon it appeared that, though he moved gently, he began to have mastery over a foe who was consuming his strength in mere anger. When he had conquered, he stood, as it were, with folded arms, and seemed willing to desist from strife. But also in the West there had been seen a knot of men possessed, for the time, of the mighty engine of the French State, and striving so to use it as to be able to keep their hold, and to shelter themselves from a cruel fate. The volitions of these men were active enough, because they were toiling for their lives. Their efforts seemed to interest and to please the lustiest man of those days, for he watched them from over the Channel with approving smile, and began to declare, in his good-humoured, boisterous way, that so long as they should be suffered to have the handling of France, so long as they would execute for him his policy, so long as they would take care not to deceive him, they ought to be encouraged, they ought to be made use of, they ought to have the shelter they wanted; and, the Frenchmen agreeing to his conditions, he was willing to level the barrier—he called it, perhaps, false pride—which divided the Government of the Queen from the venturers of the 2d of December. In this thought, at the moment, he stood almost alone; but he abided his time. At length he saw the spring of 1853,

bringing with it grave peril to the Ottoman State. Then, throwing aside with a laugh some papers which belonged to the Home Office, he gave his strong shoulder to the levelling work. Under the weight of his touch the barrier fell. Thenceforth the hindrances that met him were but slight. As he from the first had willed it, so moved the two great nations of the West.

APPENDIX.

PART I.

PAPERS SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE WHICH LED TO THE RUPTURE OF PRINCE MENTSCHIKOFF'S NEGOTIATION.

*Draft of Note proposed by Prince Mentschikoff to be addressed to him by the Porte.**

La Sublime Porte, après l'examen le plus attentif et le plus sérieux des demandes qui forment l'objet de la mission extraordinaire confiée à l'Ambassadeur de Russie, Prince Mentschikoff, et après avoir soumis le résultat de cet examen à Sa Majesté le Sultan, se fait un devoir empressé de notifier par la présente à son Altesse l'Ambassadeur la décision Impériale emanée à ce sujet par un Irade suprême en date du (date Musulmane et Chrétienne).

Sa Majesté voulant donner à son auguste allié et ami l'Empereur de Russie un nouveau témoignage de son amitié la plus sincère, et de son désir intime de consolider les anciennes relations de bon voisinage et de parfaite entente qui existent entre les deux Etats, plaçant en même temps une entière confiance dans les intentions constamment bienveillantes de Sa Majesté Impériale pour le maintien de l'intégrité et de l'indépendance de l'Empire Ottoman, a daigné apprécier et prendre en sérieuse considération les représentations franches et cordiales dont

* This was the last demand made by the Prince.

l'Ambassadeur de Russie s'est rendu l'organe en faveur du culte orthodoxe Greco-Russe professé par son auguste allié ainsi que par la majorité de leurs sujets respectifs.

Le Soussigné a reçu en conséquence l'ordre de donner par la présente note, l'assurance la plus solennelle au Gouvernement de Russie, que représente auprès de Sa Majesté le Sultan, son Altesse le Prince Mentschikoff, sur la sollicitude invariable et les sentiments généreux et tolérans qui animent Sa Majesté le Sultan pour la sécurité et la prospérité dans ses états du clergé, des églises, et des établissements religieux du culte Chrétien d'Orient.

Afin de rendre ces assurances plus explicites, préciser d'une manière formelle les objets principaux de cette haute sollicitude, corroborer par des éclaircissements supplémentaires que nécessite la marche du temps, le sens des Articles qui dans les Traités antérieurs conclus entre les deux Puissances ont trait aux questions religieuses, et prévenir enfin à jamais toute nuance de malentendu et de désaccord à se sujet entre les deux Gouvernements, le Soussigné est autorisé par Sa Majesté le Sultan à faire les déclarations suivantes :

1. Le culte orthodoxe d'Orient, son clergé, ses églises, et ses possessions, ainsi que ses établissements religieux, jouiront dans l'avenir sans aucune atteinte, sous l'égide de Sa Majesté le Sultan, des privilèges et immunités qui leur sont assurés *ab antiquo*, ou qui leur ont été accordés à différentes reprises par la faveur Impérial, et dans un principe de haute équité participeront aux avantages accordés aux autres rites Chrétiens, ainsi qu'aux Légations Etrangéres accréditées près la Sublime Porte par Convention ou disposition particulière.

2. Sa Majesté le Sultan ayant jugé nécessaire et équitable de corroborer et d'expliquer son firman souverain revêtu du hatti-houmayoum le 15 de la lune de Rebiul-Akhir 1268 (10 Février, 1852), par son firman souverain du et d'ordonner en sus par un autre firman en date du la réparation de la coupole du Temple du Saint Sépulcre, ces deux firmans seront textuellement exécutés et fidèlement observés, pour maintenir à jamais le *status quo* actuel des sanctuaires

possedés par les Grecs exclusivement ou en commun avec d'autres cultes.

Il est entendu que cette promesse s'étend également au maintien de tous les droits et immunités dont jouissent *ab antiquo* l'église orthodoxe et son clergé tant dans la ville de Jérusalem qu'au-déhors, sans aucun prejudice pour les autres communautés Chrétiennes.

3. Pour le cas où la Cour Impériale de Russie en ferait la demande, il sera assigné une localité convenable dans la ville de Jérusalem ou dans les environs pour la construction d'une église consacrée à la célébration du service divin par les ecclésiastiques Russes, et d'un hospice pour les pélerins indigents ou malades, lesquelles fondations seront sous la surveillance spéciale du Consulat-Général de Russie en Syrie et en Palestine.

4. On donnera les firmans et les ordres nécessaires à qui de droit et aux Patriarches Grecs pour l'exécution de ces décisions souveraines, et on s'entendra ultérieurement sur la régularisation des points de détail qui n'auront pas trouvé place tant dans les firmans concernant les lieux saints de Jérusalem que dans la présente notification.

Le Soussigné, &c.

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*Reshid Pasha to Prince Mentschikoff.**

(Translation.)

THE statement made by Prince Mentschikoff, in his written and verbal communications, concerning the doubts and want of confidence entertained by the Porte with regard to His Majesty the Emperor's good intentions, has been seen with great regret. His Majesty the Sultan has perfect faith and confidence in His Majesty the Emperor, and highly appreciates the great qualities and spirit of justice which animate his august ally and neighbour, and it is a great honour for me to proclaim that it has always been His Majesty the Sultan's desire to consolidate and

* This was the last offer made by the Porte to Prince Mentschikoff.

strengthen the friendly relations happily subsisting between the two countries.

With reference to the religious privileges of the Greek churches and clergy, the honour of the Porte requires that the exclusively spiritual privileges granted under the Sultan's predecessors, and confirmed by His Majesty, should be now and henceforward preserved unimpaired and in force; and the equitable system pursued by the Porte towards its subjects demands that any spiritual privilege whatever granted henceforward to one class of Christian subjects should not be refused to the Greek clergy. It would be a cause of much regret that the fixed intentions of His Majesty the Sultan in this respect should be called into question.

Nevertheless, the imperial firman now granted to the Greek Patriarchate, confirming the religious privileges, is considered to afford a new proof of His Imperial Majesty's benevolent sentiments in this respect, and the general promulgation thereof must afford every security, and remove for ever from His Imperial Majesty's mind all doubts for the future respecting the religion which he professes, and it is with pleasure that I perform the duty of making this declaration.

In order that there should be no alteration respecting the Shrine at Jerusalem, it is formally promised that for security in the future thereon the Sublime Porte will take no step concerning them without the knowledge of the French and Russian Governments. An official note has been addressed to the French Embassy also to this purpose.

The Sultan consents that a church and hospital should be built at Jerusalem (for the Russians); and the Porte is ready and disposed to conclude a Sened, both on this subject and concerning the special privileges of the Russian monks at that place.

PART II.

THE 'VIENNA NOTE,' WITH THE PROPOSED TURKISH MODIFICATIONS, SHOWING THE POINTS OF THE DIFFERENCE, WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND TURKEY.

Copy of the Vienna Projet de Note, as modified by the Sublime Porte.

[The Turkish modifications are shown by printing in italics the words which the Porte rejected, and placing the words which it proposed to substitute in the foot-note.]

SA Majesté le Sultan n'ayant rien de plus à cœur que de rétablir entre elle et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie les relations de bon voisinage et de parfaite entente qui ont été malheureusement altérées par de récentes et pénibles complications, a pris soigneusement à tâcher de rechercher les moyens d'effacer les traces de ce différend.

Un irade suprême en date du lui ayant fait connaître la décision Impériale, la Sublime Porte se félicite de pouvoir la communiquer à son Excellence M. le Comte de Nesselrode.

Si à toute époque les Empereurs de Russie ont témoignés leur active sollicitude pour *le maintien des immunités et privilèges de l'Eglise Orthodoxe Grecque dans l'Empire Ottoman, les Sultans ne se sont jamais refusés à les consacrer** de nouveau *par des*

* Le culte et l'Eglise Orthodoxe Grecque, les Sultans n'ont jamais cessé de veiller au maintien des immunités et privilèges qu'ils ont spontanément accordés à diverses reprises à ce culte et à cette Eglise dans l'Empire Ottoman, et de les consacrer.

actes solennels qui attestaient de leur ancienne et constante bienveillance à l'égard de leurs sujets Chrétiens.

Sa Majesté le Sultan Abdul-Medjid, aujourd'hui régnant, animé des mêmes dispositions et voulant donner à Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie un témoignage personnel de son amitié la plus sincère, n'a écouté que sa confiance infinie dans les qualités éminentes de son auguste ami et allié, et a daigné prendre en sérieuse considération les représentations dont son Altesse le Prince de Mentschikoff s'est rendu l'organe auprès de la Sublime Porte.

Le Soussigné a reçu en conséquence l'ordre de déclarer par la présente que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan restera fidèle *à la lettre et à l'esprit des stipulations des Traités de Kainardji et d'Andrinople, relatives à la protection du culte Chrétien,** et que Sa Majesté regarde comme étant de son honneur de faire observer à tout jamais, et de préserver de toute atteinte, soit présentement, soit dans l'avenir, la jouissance des privilèges spirituels qui ont été accordés par les augustes aïeux de Sa Majesté à l'Eglise Orthodoxe de l'Orient, qui sont maintenus et confirmés par elle ; et, en outre, à faire participer dans un esprit de haute équité le rit Grec aux avantages *concédés aux autres rits Chrétiens par Convention ou disposition particulière.*†

Au reste, comme le firman Impérial qui vient d'être donné au patriarcat et au clergé Grec, et qui contient les confirmations de leurs privilèges spirituels, devra être regardé comme une nouvelle preuve de ses nobles sentiments, et comme, en outre, la proclamation de ce firman, qui donne toute sécurité, devra faire disparaître toute crainte à l'égard du rit qui est la religion de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie ; je suis heureux d'être chargé du devoir de faire la présente notification.

* Aux stipulations du Traité de Kainardji confirmé par celui d'Andrinople, relatives à la protection par la Sublime Porte de la religion Chrétienne, et il est en outre chargé de faire connaître.

† Octroyés, ou qui seraient octroyés, aux autres communautés Chrétiennes, sujettes Ottomanes.

PART III.

PAPERS SHOWING THE CONCORD EXISTING BETWEEN THE FOUR POWERS AT THE TIME WHEN FRANCE AND ENGLAND WERE ENGAGING IN A SEPARATE COURSE OF ACTION.

Protocol of a Conference held at Vienna, February 2, 1854.

(Translation.)

Present: The Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia.

THE Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia, have met together in conference to hear the communication which the Austrian Plenipotentiary has been good enough to make to them of the propositions submitted by the Cabinet of St Petersburg in reply to those which he had undertaken, on the 13th of January, to forward to the Imperial Government, and which were sanctioned by the approval of the Powers represented in the Conference of Vienna. The document which contains them is annexed to the present Protocol.

The Undersigned, after having submitted the above-mentioned propositions to the most careful examination, have ascertained that, in their general character and in their details, they so essentially differ from the basis of negotiation agreed upon on the 31st of December at Constantinople, and approved on the 13th January at Vienna, that they have not considered them to be such as should be forwarded to the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan.

It consequently only remains for the Undersigned to transmit the annexed document to their respective Courts, and to wait till they shall have taken their final resolutions.

(Signed) BUOL-SCHAUENSTEIN.
BOURQUENEY.
WESTMORLAND.
ARNIM.

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*The Earl of Westmorland to the Earl of Clarendon.—(Received February 13.)**

MY LORD, *Vienna, February 8, 1853.*

I HAVE just left the Conference to which Count Buol had this morning invited me, in conjunction with my colleagues. Upon our assembling, he stated that he had no proposal to make to us; but, in consideration of the perfect union existing amongst us upon the Eastern Question, he thought he was forwarding our common objects by communicating the despatches he had addressed to Count Esterhazy, for the purpose of being submitted to Count Nesselrode.

Count Buol then read to us these despatches. The first gave an account of the proposal brought forward by Count Orloff, that the Emperor of Austria should, in conjunction with Prussia, take an engagement with the Emperor of Russia for the maintenance of a strict neutrality in the war now existing with the Porte, and in which the Maritime Powers seemed likely to take part. Count Buol, in his despatch, developes in the clearest and most distinct language the impossibility of the adoption by the Emperor of any such engagement. He states, with all courtesy to the Emperor Nicholas, the obligations by which the Austrian Government is bound to watch over the strict maintenance of the principle of the independence and integrity of Turkey—a principle proclaimed by the Emperor Nicholas himself, but which the passage of the Danube by his troops

* *i. e.*, just one fortnight before England despatched the hostile summons which brought her into a state of war.

might, by the encouragement of insurrections in the Turkish Provinces, endanger. Count Buol, therefore, states that he cannot take the engagement proposed to him. The second despatch to Count Esterhazy relates to the answer which has been returned to the proposals for negotiations transmitted by Count Buol with the sanction of the Conference on the 13th ultimo.

In this despatch, Count Buol states with considerable force the disappointment felt by the Emperor at the want of success which had attended his recommendation in favour of the Turkish propositions. He enters very fully into the subject, and renews the expression of the Emperor's most anxious desire that the Emperor Nicholas may still adopt the proposals which had been submitted to him.

The last despatch is one in which Count Buol replies to the reproach which was addressed to the Imperial Government, that by its present conduct it was abandoning the principles upon which the three governments of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, had hitherto acted for the maintenance of the established interests and independence of the different States of Europe, and that, by so doing, it was endangering the established order of things in Europe, and the security at present existing.

The answer of Count Buol to this reproach is very firmly and clearly stated.

It is impossible for me to give your Lordship a more detailed account, before the departure of the messenger, of these despatches; but I must add, that they met with the entire approbation of the members of the Conference, that they were looked upon as most ably drawn up, and that while using every courteous and friendly expression towards the Emperor Nicholas, they most clearly pointed out the present position which the Austrian Government would maintain with the view of upholding the principles they had proclaimed, and the engagements which they had taken for their support.*

* The rest of the despatch relates only to a suggestion for an arrangement which came to nothing, and is therefore omitted.

Protocol of a Conference held at Vienna, March 5, 1854.*

(Translation.)

Present: the Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia.

THE undersigned, Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia, having again met in Conference on the summons of the Austrian Plenipotentiary, the annexed document which had been communicated to the Cabinet of Vienna by the Envoy of Russia, and which contains the preliminaries of the Treaty to be concluded between Russia and the Porte, was read to them, the Court of Austria being requested by the Cabinet of St Petersburg to apply for the support of the two Maritime Powers, in order to obtain the acceptance of these preliminaries by the Sublime Porte.

After mature deliberation, the Plenipotentiaries of France and Great Britain, taking as the basis of their examination the previous documents which had received the sanction of the four Powers, established the existence of radical differences between those documents and the proposed preliminaries.

1. Inasmuch as the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities, which is fixed to take place after the signature of the preliminaries, is made to depend on the departure of the combined fleets, not only from the Black Sea but from the Straits of the Bosphorus and of the Dardanelles, a condition which could only be admitted by the Maritime Powers after the conclusion of the definitive Treaty.

2. Inasmuch as the document now under consideration tends to invest with a form strictly conventional, bilateral, and exclusively applicable to the relations of the Porte with Russia, the assurances relative to the religious privileges of the Greeks—assurances which the Porte has only offered to give to the five Powers at the same time and in the form of a simple identic declaration. The assurances, in fact, once inserted in the pre-

* *i.e.*, whilst messengers were carrying the hostile summons from Paris and London to St Petersburg.

liminary Treaty, must then needs be reproduced in the definitive Treaty, and would be accompanied, moreover, by an official note confirmatory of the said privileges exclusively addressed to the Court of Russia, a note which, in its turn, would be considered as annexed to the Treaties; that is to say, as having the same force and the same effect.

3. Inasmuch as the preliminaries communicated to Vienna are, by implication, withheld from any discussion in Conference upon the modifications considered necessary to make them correspond with the original text of the Acts which had received its assent, and inasmuch as the conclusion of the definitive Treaty contains no greater reservation for its inspection and interference.

4. Inasmuch as, whilst the propositions of the Porte expressly require the revision of the Treaty of 1841, so as to make Turkey participate in the guarantees of the public law of Europe, this condition is passed over in silence.

The Plenipotentiaries of Austria and Prussia, appreciating the force of the observations offered by the Plenipotentiaries of France and of Great Britain, recognised in like manner on their part the remarkable differences pointed out between the Russian draft of preliminaries and the Protocols of the 13th of January and 2d of February.

In consequence, the Conference unanimously agreed that it was impossible to proceed with those propositions.

(Signed) BUOL-SCHAUENSTEIN.
BOURQUENEY.
WESTMORLAND.
ARNIM.

*Protocol of a Conference held at Vienna, April 9, 1854.**

(Translation.)

Present: The Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia.

AT the request of the Plenipotentiaries of France and of Great Britain, the Conference met to hear the documents read which establish that the invitation addressed to the Cabinet of St Petersburg to evacuate the Moldo-Wallachian provinces within a fixed time having remained unanswered, the state of war already declared between Russia and the Sublime Porte is in actual existence equally between Russia on the one side, and France and Great Britain on the other.

This change which has taken place in the attitude of two of the Powers represented at the Conference of Vienna, in consequence of a step taken directly by France and England, supported by Austria and Prussia as being founded in right, has been considered by the Representatives of Austria and Prussia as involving the necessity of a fresh declaration of the union of the four Powers upon the ground of the principles laid down in the Protocols of December 5, 1853, and January 13, 1854.

In consequence, the Undersigned have at this solemn moment declared that their Governments remain united in the double object of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, of which the fact of the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities is and will remain one of the essential conditions; and of consolidating in an interest so much in conformity with the sentiments of the Sultan, and by every means compatible with his independence and sovereignty, the civil and religious rights of the Christian subjects of the Porte.

The territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire is and remains the *sine quâ non* condition of every transaction having for its object the re-establishment of peace between the belligerent Powers; and the governments represented by the Undersigned

* *i.e.*, the very day before the Treaty of Alliance between England and France.

engage to endeavour in common to discover the guarantees most likely to attach the existence of that Empire to the general equilibrium of Europe; as they also declare themselves ready to deliberate and to come to an understanding as to the employment of the means calculated to accomplish the object of their agreement.

Whatever event may arise in consequence of this agreement, founded solely upon the general interests of Europe, and of which the object can only be attained by the return of a firm and lasting peace, the Governments represented by the Undersigned reciprocally engage not to enter into any definitive arrangements with the Imperial Court of Russia, or with any other Power, which would be at variance with the principles above enunciated, without previously deliberating thereon in common.

(Signed) BUOL-SCHAUENSTEIN.
BOURQUENEY.
WESTMORLAND.
ARNIM.

Treaty of Alliance, Offensive and Defensive, between Austria and Prussia.

(Translation.)

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, and His Majesty the King of Prussia, penetrated with deep regret at the fruitlessness of their attempts hitherto to prevent the breaking out of war between Russia, on the one hand, and Turkey, France, and England, on the other;

Mindful of the moral obligations entered into by them by the signing of the last Vienna Protocol;

In the face of the military measures ever gathering on both sides around them, and of the dangers resulting therefrom for the general peace of Europe;

Convinced of the high duty which on the threshold of a future pregnant with evil, is imposed, in the interest of the

European welfare, on Germany, so intimately united with the States of the two High Parties;

Have determined to ally themselves in an offensive and defensive alliance for the duration of the war which has broken out between Russia, on the one hand, and Turkey, France, and England, on the other, and have appointed for the conclusion of it the following Plenipotentiaries:

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, the Baron Henry de Hess, his actual Privy Councillor, &c. &c.; and the Count Frederick de Thun-Hohenstein, his Chamberlain, actual Privy Councillor, &c. &c.;

And His Majesty the King of Prussia, the Baron Othon Theodore de Manteuffel, his President of the Council of Ministers, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, &c. &c.

The same having exchanged their full powers found to be in good order, have agreed upon the following points:

Article I.

His Imperial Apostolic Majesty and His Majesty the King of Prussia guarantee to each other reciprocally the possession of their German and non-German possessions, so that an attack made on the territory of the one, from whatever quarter, will be regarded by the other as an act of hostility against his own territory.

Article II.

In the same manner, the High Contracting Parties hold themselves engaged to defend the rights and interests of Germany against all and every injury, and consider themselves bound accordingly for the mutual repulse of every attack on any part whatsoever of their territories; likewise also in the case where one of the two may find himself, in understanding with the other, obliged to advance actively for the defence of German interests. The agreement relating to the latter-named eventuality, as likewise the extent of the assistances then to be given, will form a special, as also integral, part of the present Convention.

ARTICLE III.

In order also to give due security and force to the conditions of the offensive and defensive alliance now concluded, the two Great German Powers bind themselves, in case of need, to hold in perfect readiness for war a part of their forces, at periods to be determined between them and in positions to be fixed. With respect to the time, the extent, and the nature of the placing of those troops, a special stipulation will likewise be determined.

ARTICLE IV.

The High Contracting Parties will invite all the German Governments of the Confederation to accede to this alliance, with the understanding that the federal obligations existing in virtue of Article 47 of the final Act of Vienna will receive the same extension for the States who accede as the present Treaty stipulates.

ARTICLE V.

Neither of the two High Contracting Parties will, during the duration of this alliance, enter into any separate alliance with other Powers which shall not be in entire harmony with the basis of the present treaty.

ARTICLE VI.

The present Convention shall be ratified as soon as possible by the High Contracting Sovereigns.

Done at Berlin, April 20, 1854.*

(L.S.) HENRY BON. DE HESS.
(L.S.) F. THUN.
(L.S.) BON. OTH. THEOD. MANTEUFFEL.

* *i.e.*, ten days after the date of the Anglo-French alliance.

(Translation.)

Additional Article to the Offensive and Defensive Alliance between Austria and Prussia of April 20, 1854.

ACCORDING to the conditions of Article II. of the Treaty concluded this day between His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria, and His Majesty the King of Prussia, for the establishment of an offensive and defensive alliance, a more intimate understanding with respect to the eventuality when an active advance of one of the High Contracting Parties may impose on the other the obligation of a mutual protection of the territory of both, was to form the subject of a special agreement to be considered as an integral part of the Treaty.

Their Majesties have not been able to divest themselves of the consideration, that the indefinite continuance of the occupation of the territories on the Lower Danube, under the sovereignty of the Ottoman Porte, by Imperial Russian troops, would endanger the political, moral, and material interests of the whole German Confederation, as also of their own States, and the more so in proportion as Russia extends her warlike operations on Turkish territory.

The Courts of Austria and Prussia are united in the desire to avoid every participation in the war which has broken out between Russia, on the one hand, and Turkey, France, and Great Britain, on the other, and at the same time to contribute to the restoration of general peace. They more especially consider the declarations lately made at Berlin by the Court of St Petersburg, to be an important element of pacification, the failure of the practical influence of which they would view with regret. According to these declarations, Russia appears to regard the original motive for the occupation of the Principalities as removed by the concessions now granted to the Christian subjects of the Porte, which offer the prospect of realisation. They, therefore, hope that the replies awaited from the Cabinet of Russia to the Prussian propositions, transmitted on the 8th, will offer to them the necessary guarantee for an early withdrawal of the Russian troops. In the event that this hope

should be illusory, the Plenipotentiaries named on the part of His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, Freiherr Baron von Hess and Count Thun, and on the part of His Majesty the King of Prussia, Baron Manteuffel, have drawn up the following more detailed agreement with respect to the eventuality alluded to in the above-mentioned Article II. of the Treaty of Alliance of this day:

Single Article.

The Imperial Austrian Government will also on their side address a communication to the Imperial Russian Court with the object of obtaining from the Emperor of Russia the necessary orders, that an immediate stop should be put to the further advance of his armies upon the Turkish territory, as also to request of His Imperial Majesty sufficient guarantees for the prompt evacuation of the Danubian Principalities; and the Prussian Government will again, in the most emphatic manner, support these communications with reference to their proposals already sent to St Petersburg. Should the answer of the Russian Court to these steps of the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin—contrary to expectation—not be of a nature to give them entire satisfaction upon the two points aforementioned, the measures to be taken by one of the Contracting Parties for their attainment, according to the terms of Article II. of the Offensive and Defensive Alliance signed on this day, will be on the understanding, that every hostile attack on the territory of one of the Contracting Parties is to be repelled with all the military forces at the disposal of the other.

But a mutual offensive advance is stipulated for only in the event of the incorporation of the Principalities, or in the event of an attack on, or passage of, the Balkan by Russia.*

* Of course the contemplated march of Austrian troops into the Principalities (though undertaken with a view to expel the Russian forces) could not be 'a mutual offensive advance.' The clause defines the circumstances in which the two great German sovereigns should be bound to attack Russia, and does not cast any obscurity upon that part of the treaty which provided for the event in which 'one of the two may find himself in understanding with the others obliged to advance actively for the defence of German interests.'

The present Convention shall be submitted for the ratification of the High Sovereigns simultaneously with the above-mentioned Treaty.

Done at Berlin the 28th of April 1854.

(Signed) HESS. (Signed) MANTEUFFEL.
THUN.

Protocol signed at Vienna on the 23d of May 1854 by the Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia.

(Translation.)

Present: The Representatives of Austria, France, Great Britain, and Prussia.

THE Undersigned Plenipotentiaries have deemed it conformable to the arrangements contained in the Protocol of the 9th of April, to meet in conference in order to communicate reciprocally, and record in one common Act, the Conventions concluded between France and England on the one hand, and between Austria and Prussia on the other, upon the 10th and 20th of April of the present year.

After a careful examination of the aforesaid Conventions, the Undersigned have unanimously agreed:

1. That the Convention concluded between France and England, as well as that signed on the 20th of April between Austria and Prussia, bind both of them, in the relative situations to which they apply, to secure the maintenance of the principle established by the series of Protocols of the Conference of Vienna.

2. That the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and the evacuation of that portion of its territory which is occupied by the Russian army, are, and will continue to be, the constant and invariable object of the union of the four Powers.

3. That, consequently, the Acts communicated and annexed to the present Protocol correspond to the engagement which the Plenipotentiaries had mutually contracted on the 9th of April, to deliberate and agree upon the means most fit to accomplish the object of their union, and thus give a fresh sanction to the

firm intention of the four Powers represented at the Conference of Vienna, to combine all their efforts and resolutions to realise the object which forms the basis of their union.

(Signed) BUOL-SCHAUENSTEIN.
BOURQUENEY.
WESTMORLAND.
ARNIM.

Convention between His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria and the Ottoman Porte. Signed at Boyadji-Keuy, June 14, 1854.

(Translation.)

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, fully recognising that the existence of the Ottoman Empire within its present limits is necessary for the maintenance of the balance of power between the States of Europe, and that, specifically, the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities is one of the essential conditions of the integrity of that Empire; being, moreover, ready to join, with the means at his disposal, in the measures proper to insure the object of the agreement established between his Cabinet and the High Courts represented at the Conference of Vienna:

His Imperial Majesty the Sultan having, on his side, accepted this offer of concert, made in a friendly manner by His Majesty the Emperor of Austria;

It has seemed proper to conclude a Convention, in order to regulate the manner in which the concert in question shall be carried into effect.

With this object, His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Austria, and His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, have named as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, M. le Baron Charles de Bruck, Privy Councillor of His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, his Internuncio and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Sublime Ottoman Porte, Grand Cross of the Imperial Order of Leopold, Knight of the Imperial Order of the Iron Crown of the first class, &c.;

And His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, Mustapha Reshid Pasha, late Grand Vizier, and at present his Minister for Foreign Affairs, decorated with the Imperial Order of Medjidié of the first class, &c.;

Who, after having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed upon the following Articles:

ARTICLE I.

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria engages to exhaust all the means of negotiation, and all other means, to obtain the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities by the foreign army which occupies them, and even to employ, in case they are required, the number of troops necessary to attain this end.

ARTICLE II.

It will appertain in this case exclusively to the Imperial Commander-in-chief to direct the operations of his army. He will, however, always take care to inform the Commander-in-chief of the Ottoman army of his operations in proper time.

ARTICLE III.

His Majesty the Emperor of Austria undertakes, by common agreement with the Ottoman Government, to re-establish in the Principalities, as far as possible, the legal state of things such as it results from the privileges secured by the Sublime Porte in regard to the administration of those countries. The local authorities thus reconstituted shall not, however, extend their action so far as to attempt to exercise control over the Imperial army.

ARTICLE IV.

The Imperial Court of Austria further engages not to enter into any plan of accommodation with the Imperial Court of Russia which has not for its basis the sovereign rights of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, as well as the integrity of his Empire.

ARTICLE V.

As soon as the object of the present Convention shall have been obtained by the conclusion of a Treaty of Peace between

the Sublime Porte and the Court of Russia, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria will immediately make arrangements for withdrawing his forces with the least possible delay from the territory of the Principalities. The details respecting the retreat of the Austrian troops shall form the object of a special understanding with the Sublime Porte.

ARTICLE VI.

The Austrian Government expects that the authorities of the countries temporarily occupied by the Imperial troops will afford them every assistance and facility, as well for their march, their lodging, or encampment, as for their subsistence and that of their horses, and for their communications. The Austrian Government likewise expects that every demand relating to the requirements of the service shall be complied with, which shall be addressed by the Austrian commanders, either to the Ottoman Government, through the Imperial Internunciate at Constantinople, or directly to the local authorities, unless more weighty reasons render the execution of them impossible.

It is understood that the commanders of the Imperial army will provide for the maintenance of the strictest discipline among their troops, and will respect, and cause to be respected, the properties as well as the laws, the religion, and the customs of the country.

ARTICLE VII.

The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at Vienna in the space of four weeks, or earlier if possible, dating from the day of its signature.

In faith of which the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed it and set their seals to it.

Done in duplicate, for one and the same effect, at Boyadji-Keuy, the fourteenth of June, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

(L.S.) V. BRUCK. (L.S.) RESHID.

PART IV.

NOTE TO PAGE 302.

THE condition of the French Emperor on the day of Magenta was publicly seen; but on the day of the great battle which was soon afterwards fought on the Mincio, he avoided the criticism of multitudinous eyewitnesses, and great pains were taken to make France and Europe believe that the Emperor on the day of Solferino was, not only in a state to be able to give useful orders, but was actually present on a part of the field where there was dreadful danger. 'The Emperor Napoleon,' said the *Moniteur*, 'was, so to speak, superior to himself: everywhere he was seen, always directing the battle; every one about him shuddered at the danger which incessantly threatened him; he alone seemed to be ignorant of it.' These efforts caused people in England to believe a good deal of what was represented to them; but in France their success was hindered by a practical difficulty which the French Emperor had brought upon himself by his odd love of dresses and imitative display. In the ride he took on the day of Solferino, he had chosen to be followed, not only, as might have been expected, by a numerous staff, but also by a cavalry escort, with beautiful new dresses and decorations, which went by the name of the 'Cent Gardes'—'The Hundred Guards.' All these horsemen—the whole Imperial staff and the cavalry escort—covered altogether a good deal of ground—ground as broad and as long as many a whole street; and if they had really intruded themselves into any part of the field where there was what may be called 'fighting,' then, humanly speaking, they must have undergone dreadful carnage. It so happened, however, that of all this acreage of horsemen not one was killed, and only one of the 'Cent Gardes' was even touched—said by some to have been struck in a part of his dress, and warranted by the *Moniteur* to have been hit in the actual body—*Moniteur*, 29th June 1859. Here then was the practical difficulty. It had to be represented that a large mass of horsemen had been moving about all day in the thick of a most bloody battle, and yet had remained unscathed. In this stress the *Moniteur* did not hesitate. It resorted to the theory of preternatural agency. It declared that the protection which the Deity threw around the Emperor *was extended to his suite*. 'La protection dont Dieu l'a couvert s'est etendue à son état-major.'—*Moniteur*, 29th June 1859.

Paris laughed her laugh; and thenceforth it seems to have been understood by the more prudent of the Imperialists in France that the subject of their Master's demeanour on the day of Solferino was one which they might advantageously drop.

The process of dispelling a falsehood sometimes generates a wrong notion —a notion that the exact opposite of the falsehood so dispelled is the truth. I must guard against this. The French Emperor at Solferino conducted himself in exact accordance with what I have said in the text. 'He did not so give way to fear as to prove that he had less self-control in moments of danger than the common run of peaceful citizens, but he showed that, though he had chosen to set himself heroic tasks, his temperament was ill-fitted for the hour of battle, and for the crisis of an adventure.'

END OF VOL. I.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

00029996

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 June, 2018